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VOL. II.

Παντα δοκιμαζετε.
PAUL.

..... *Si quid novisti rectius istis,*
Candidus imperti. .....
HORACE.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:
Printed for J. JOHNSON, in ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.
MDCCXCV.

1875, March 22.
Bequest of
James Walker, D.D., L.L.D.
(H.C. 1814.)
President of Harv. Univ.

1897
44-43
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Theological Repoſitory.

Remarks upon an Eſſay on the Sacrifice of Chriſt, Part I. *in the* Theological Repoſitory, Number III.

THE author of this *eſſay* ſeems to have miſtaken the true *ſcripture* notion of *reconciliation*, by incautiouſly following the ſteps of ſome learned writers without due examination. But the greateſt and moſt learned names are not of equal authority with *that* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt (*a name which is above every name*, Phil. ii. 9.) who hath plainly fixed the true and proper meaning of this *ſcripture* phraſe, the being *reconciled* to any one, in the following paſſage; Matt. v. 23, 24. *Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar and there remembereſt that thy* brother hath ought againſt thee; *leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; firſt* be reconciled to thy brother, *and then come and offer thy gift.* It follows, v. 25. Agree *with thine* adverſary *quickly, &c.* By this clear inſtance and example we ſee, that in *ſcripture* language, the *being reconciled* (however this expreſſion may be com-

monly uſed and applied in our Engliſh way of ſpeaking) ſignifies the *offending* party's making his *peace* with the party *offended*, by giving him proper ſatisfaction, and *agreeing* to his terms of accommodation and friendſhip. It is not ſaid any where *expreſsly* (as a learned divine hath obſerved*) that God *is reconciled unto us*, but that we are *reconciled* to God. And the *ſole reaſon* thereof is, becauſe he is the *party offended*, and we are the *parties offending*; now the party *offending* is always ſaid to be *reconciled* to the party *offended*, and not on the contrary. So Matt. v. 23, 24. *If thy brother hath ought againſt thee, go and be reconciled to him.* The brother being the party *offended*, he that *had offended*, was to be *reconciled* to him by turning away his anger; and in *common ſpeech*, when one hath *juſtly provoked* another, we bid him *go*, and *reconcile himſelf* to him; that is, *do that* which may *appeaſe* him, and gain an entrance into his *favour* again. So is it in the *caſe* under conſideration; being the parties *offending*, we are ſaid to be *reconciled* to God, when his *anger* is *turned away*, and we are *admitted into his favour*.—Again, in the ſame ſenſe the word *reconcile* is uſed in the following text alſo; 1 Sam. xxix. 4. *Wherewith ſhould he (meaning* David) reconcile himſelf *to his maſter*; (that is, *make*, or purchaſe, his *peace* with Saul) *ſhould it* not *be* with the heads of theſe men? And upon further inquiry it may appear, that this is the true, proper and preciſe notions of *re-*

* Dr. J. Owen's Vindic. Evangel. ch. xxix. page 615.

conciliation

conciliation in *ſcripture* language, and particularly in the language of the *New Teſtament* *.

Let us now apply this notion to the caſe of ſinners being *reconciled to God*; the grand ſubject, or ſcope and object of the goſpel-embaſſy. And ſo, their being reconciled to God ſtrictly and properly denotes, not laying aſide *their enmity*, or diſpleaſure, *againſt God*, but their averting *his diſpleaſure* from *themſelves*, by complying with the terms of his favour and acceptance propounded in the goſpel of his ſon, that *word of reconciliation*. Thus ſays St. Paul, 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. *that God was in Chriſt* reconciling *the world* unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes *unto them*; (where, we ſee, that reconciling the world unto himſelf is the ſame thing, in effect, with *not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them*; or pardoning their ſins †, and receiving them into a ſtate of favour and friendſhip with himſelf.) Now then (as the apoſtle adds) we are ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech *you*, by us, we pray, *you*, in Chriſt's ſtead, *Be ye* reconciled to God; *that is* make your peace with God, by complying with thoſe terms of his acceptance, which we offer to you in the name, and by the deputation or commiſſion of Chriſt, the chief in this grand embaſſy from heaven.

Thus then we plainly ſee, that ſinners being *reconciled* to God, does not directly ſignify, laying aſide their *enmity*, or diſpleaſure *againſt him*, but

* See Dr. Hammond, on Matt. v. 24. H. Grot. de ſatisfact. Chriſti. chap. vii. † Non imputare autem peccata, et remittere idem valent. H. Grot. ibid.

their

their *averting* his *diſpleaſure from themſelves*, by *making their peace* with God upon the goſpel terms of his gracious acceptance; and ſo obtaining the pardon, and eſcaping the puniſhment of their ſins. See Rom. v. 8, 9, 10. Thoſe terms, however, of the divine acceptance, may be underſtood to include ſinners laying aſide their enmity to God as a *condition* of gaining his favour; and ſo *this* muſt be a neceſſary qualification *for*, though without conſtituting the formal nature *of*, their reconciliation to God. Which diſtinction, if attended to and well conſidered, may poſſibly remove all difficulties, and ſet the whole affair in a clear light, without departing from the propriety of *ſcripture* language. And what the *eſſay-writer* ſays (page 177.) is undoubtedly true, if taken in a right ſenſe, according to the idiom of the *ſacred ſtyle*, viz. That the whole deſign of Chriſt's mediation is to *reconcile men to God*; that is, as this mode of ſpeech hath been explained, recover and reſtore them to his *favour* and friendſhip.

This notion of *reconciliation* ſeems to be ſo plainly delivered in the *holy ſcriptures*, and particularly in the words of our Saviour beforementioned, that one may juſtly wonder, how it came to be overlooked by any writers of good ſenſe and ſound learning. But great, amazingly great, is the power of prejudice and prepoſſeſſion, which like a *gift*, or bribe, *doth blind the eyes of the wiſe*. One pre-conceived opinion, however ill-grounded, can eaſily lead perſons into another, which hath no better foundation in the nature and reaſon of things,

which

which I ſtrongly ſuſpect, will prove, upon inquiry, to be the very caſe in hand. For, the notion that ſinners being *reconciled to God*, does not ſignify *making their peace with God*, may very well be conceived to proceed from a ſuppoſition that God is not *diſpleaſed with them*, but that, on the contrary, ſinners are *diſpleaſed with God*; and ſo their being *reconciled* to him, denotes laying aſide their *enmity* to him, and receiving God into their favour. Thus ſays a firſt-rate writer on that ſide the queſtion*, "There could be no need of *reconciling God to man*, when he had already ſhewn his love to man ſo far as to ſend his ſon to *reconcile man to God.*"

But can this poſſibly be true, viz. that ſinners, as ſuch, are not objects of God's holy and righteous diſpleaſure; conſidering him as the *moral* governor of the world, wiſely and juſtly concerned to ſupport the honour and dignity of his own adminiſtration, and the authority of thoſe excellent laws by which he rules his rational, intelligent creatures for the preſervation of order, harmony, and happineſs through the whole ſyſtem? What! was there no need, *e. g.* of *reconciling God* to the friends of Job (to ſpeak in our author's ſtyle, though, as hath been ſhewn before, the language is *unſcriptural*, and for that reaſon improper upon the preſent ſubject) when he had *already ſhewn his love to them* ſo far as to appoint Job to be their *interceſſor*, and offer *propitiatory ſacrifices* for them? But we are expreſsly told, his *wrath was kindled*

* Dr. Sykes on Hebr. vii. 27.

againſt

againſt them. And for this very *reaſon* it was that God, in his great mercy, directed them to the method aforeſaid of averting his diſpleaſure, and preventing his *dealing with* them *according to* their *follies.* Job xl. 7—9. *The application of all which to the goſpel ſcheme of* reconciling ſinners to God, *is eaſy and obvious. And upon the foot of this* parallel *the argument may be thus reſtored.* God's having already ſhewn his love to mankind, ſo far as to ſend his ſon to *reconcile men to God,* is no proof at all, that there would be no need of *reconciling God to man* (as Dr. Sykes inaccurately expreſſes it in language unknown to *ſcripture*; it is well enough, however, that we underſtand his meaning) but the contrary. For, if God had not been previouſly *diſpleaſed* with man; there would have been no ground, or occaſion for ſhewing his love to man in this inſtance of ſending his ſon to *reconcile man to God.*

This very remarkable caſe of Job and his three friends, deſerves to be well conſidered; and accordingly ſeveral writers have taken notice, and made a proper uſe of it, both formerly, and of late*. The remarks made upon it by one of thoſe writers, viz. the learned Dr. J. Owen, I think worth tranſcribing, and are as follows. "The offenders are *Eliphaz* and his two *friends*; the *offence* is their *folly* in *not ſpeaking aright of God*; the iſſue of the breach is, that the *wrath,* or *anger* of God was toward

* See Trueman's Great Propitiation, page 19. Dr. J. Owen's Vindic. Evangel. chap. xxix. page 611. A Scripture Account of Sacrifices, page 29, &c.

them:

them: *reconciliation* is the turning away of that wrath; the means whereby this was to be done, appointed of God, is the *ſacrifice of Job* for atonement?

From what hath been ſaid concerning the *ſcripture* notion of *reconciling ſinners to God*, and of his real *diſpleaſure* with them for their ſins, as exemplified in the caſe mentioned juſt before; there ſeems to be a good foundation for concluding, that there is ſufficient room in the divine œconomy, or in the ſcheme of divine wiſdom and goodneſs, to introduce a *propitiatory ſacrifice*, and a proper *interceſſor*, as an appointed mean of averting the *divine diſpleaſure*, or, which is the ſame thing in effect, the *puniſhment of ſin*, from the offender. I ſay, which is the ſame thing in effect; for the divine diſpleaſure in this caſe is not to be conſidered as a *private paſſion*, or emotion of angry reſentment, in the Deity; but as a *public act*, or exerciſe of *rectoral* juſtice, inflicting deſerved puniſhment upon evil-doers, which *puniſhment*, and ſo by conſequence the *divine diſpleaſure*, may be averted from ſinners, and their *reconciliation to God* effected by means of a *propitiation*, and *interceſſion* of his own appointing. Thus, *while we were yet* ſinners *Chriſt* died *for us*; *and when we were* enemies *we were* reconciled to God *by the* death *of his ſon.* (Rom. v. 8, 10.) *And if any man ſin, we have an* advocate *with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous: And he is the* propitiation *for our ſins*, &c. (1 John ii. 1, 2.) For *in him we have redemption* through his blood *the* forgiveneſs of ſins; (Eph. i. 7. Col. i. 14.) in which

conſiſts

conſiſts our *reconciliation to God*; as hath been made appear, I think, with a ſufficient degree of evidence. And this introduces a *change* in the *ſtate* of ſinners, and in God's *diſpenſations* towards them, though his *nature* is unchangeable. The divine *attributes* and *perfections* are *immutably* the ſame; but they are differently *exerciſed* and diſplayed upon different occaſions, as the caſe may require; not only upon different objects, but upon the ſame objects, *perſonally* conſidered as their *moral* character and behaviour may alter and vary, and render them *veſſels of wrath*, or *of mercy*.

We are told, in the eſſay before us (p. 176.) "the obedience, the ſufferings and ſacrifice of Chriſt for the ſins and ſalvation of men, can effect no alteration or change in God, &c. to make God more benevolent, &c. than he is in his *own nature*," &c. All which is freely granted: but what follows from thence? Not ſurely that the death of Chriſt was no *propitiatory offering*, or *proper ſacrifice for ſin*. For, upon the ſame principles it muſt follow, that there never were any ſuch offerings or ſacrifices at all of God's appointing. Which yet ſome of theſe writers allow*, and indeed cannot deny without contradicting the plain, expreſs words of *ſcripture*. And with reſpect to the *ſacrifice* of Chriſt, this author himſelf ſays (p. 174.) "The offering that Jeſus Chriſt made of himſelf to God, as a ſacrifice of *atonement* and *propitiation* for the *ſins* of the world, is often, and largely treated

* See Sykes on Hebr. ix. 7.

of

of in ſacred *ſcripture*, and eſpecially in the New Teſtament." But in what ſenſe, and with what propriety upon *his* plan, or even conſiſtency with his own notion of *reconciliation*, this conceſſion is made, is a point which wants a little explaining. It is certain, however, that ſome writers upon this ſubject are guilty of a great inconſiſtency, when they repreſent the *death* of Chriſt, not as a *proper*, but only as a *figurative ſacrifice*; and at the ſame time argue againſt the notion of its being a *real*, and *proper ſacrifice for ſin*, upon thoſe principles, which imply, that there *cannot* poſſibly be, and ſo in fact *never* were, any ſuch ſacrifices at all. Which is a manifeſt contradiction; for all *figures* ſuppoſe *realities*, being built upon them, and *alluding* to them. Therefore, if *real* and *proper ſacrifices for ſin* were never in being, or had no place under any religious diſpenſation; the conſequence of this muſt be, that the death of Chriſt is not ſo much even as a *figurative* ſacrifice. But, if ſuch ſacrifices did ever exiſt, and were in uſe, by divine appointment, it is incumbent upon thoſe writers, that oppoſe the notion of Chriſt's death being a ſacrifice of the *ſame kind*, to ſhew why his death was not as *proper* a *ſacrifice for ſin*, as any of thoſe ancient *ſin-offerings* can be ſuppoſed to have been. For the death of Chriſt is often ſpoken of in the ſame *ſacrifical* terms on ſundry occaſions*. Our author himſelf as we have ſeen before,

* Iſai. liii. 5—8. John i. 29. Acts 8. 35. Rev. v. 9—12.—xiii. 8. Matt. xx. 28. Mark x. 45. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Rom.

before, ſays, "The offering that Jeſus Chriſt made of himſelf to God, as a *ſacrifice of atonement* and *propitiation* for the *ſins* of the world, is often, and largely treated of in *ſacred ſcripture*, *&c.*

If this matter be well conſidered, I am prone to think, the death of Chriſt will prove, in the reſult, to be a *ſacrifice for ſin* in an higher and more eminent ſenſe, than any other ſacrifice that was ever before offered up to God under that ſame notion. For, ſuppoſing (which to me appears to be the beſt account of the firſt riſe and origin of ſacrifices*) the rite, and uſe of them was at the beginning inſtituted by God; particularly, as a ſacred memorial of the firſt *promiſe* of a Redeemer (Gen. iii. 15.) And to be a type of Chriſt, the *Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world*; (Rev. xiii. 8.) upon that ſuppoſition the death of Chriſt may well be regarded as the *moſt proper* ſacrifice for ſin, that was ever in any age of the world, offered upon God's altar. Becauſe the thing *typified* muſt, in all reaſon, be judged more *ſignificant* and expreſſive

Rom. iii. 24, 25.—v. 10, 11. Eph. i. 7. Col. i. 14. Hebr. ix. 12. 1 John ii. 2. Hebr. i. 3.—ii. 17.—ix. 24—26. Matt. xxvi. 28. Rom. iv. 25.—v. 6—10. 1 Cor. v. 7—xv. 3. Eph. v. 2. Hebr. x. 10, 14, 18, &c. Speculative men may at their leiſure refine, as much as they pleaſe, upon the *grammatical* ſenſe of the words in thoſe and the like texts of holy ſcripture, but the only queſtion with true critics is, what ſuch language meant, and how it was intended to be underſtood, according to the common idioms of ſpeech at the time when it was uſed.

* See Hallet on Hebr. xi. 4. Dr. Leland's view of deiſtical writers, vol. ii. p. 177, &c.

than

than the bare type in that point of correſpondency, in which they agreed together, and mutually anſwered to each other*. Inſtead, therefore, of calling the ſacrifice of Chriſt a *metaphorical* or *figurative* ſacrifice, it may be more proper to ſay, that all the former ſacrifices were *figurative* or *prefigurative* of the great ſacrifice of Chriſt†, who was come to appear in the end of the world to *put away ſin* by the *ſacrifice of himſelf* (Hebr. ix. 26.) *Thoſe were the* ſhadow, *and this the* ſubſtance. (Col. ii. 17. Hebr. x. 1.)

After all, there is one point which remains to be cleared up, viz. what is the proper nature, uſe and deſign, or effect of a *ſacrifice for ſin?* If the writers upon this ſubject could once agree among themſelves upon a *definition* of ſuch a ſacrifice, this might be an happy mean of putting an end to all diſputes about the thing. I do not know, whether I ſhall be able to define it to general ſatisfaction. However I ſhall attempt to do it in the beſt manner I can; after premiſing, that in a queſtion of this nature ſtrict regard ſhould be had to the language of *ſcripture*, and the meaning of *ſcripture-expreſſions* muſt be fixed, by reducing the words to the primitive ſtandard; that is, the common uſe and *cuſtom*‡ of the age when ſuch language was currently ſpoken, and for that reaſon eaſily underſtood by all people. If the critics of later

* Plus enim, non minus, ſemper eſt in re, typo deſignata, quam in typo, ut ratio demonſtrat, &c. Grot. de ſatisfact. Chriſti, cap. x. † Vid. Outram de ſacrif. lib. i. cap. xviii. ‡ Quam penes arbitrium eſt, et jus, et norma loquendi. Horat. de art. poetic.

times would govern themſelves by this rule, and not take upon them to explain the *holy ſcriptures*, or any other *ancient* books, by the mere dint of their own genius, but by a proper knowledge of *antiquity*, and by a due regard to the *current ſenſe*, and common uſe of words and phraſes at the time when the authors lived and flouriſhed; they would, doubtleſs, purſue the right method for doing juſtice both to the authors and to themſelves, in the inveſtigation of truth. Above all, peculiar attention muſt be juſtly due to the *words which the Holy Ghoſt* dictated and *taught*. For as the *ſacred writers* were favoured with a ſpecial divine illumination, they muſt be preſumed to expreſs themſelves upon religious ſubjects with the beſt propriety of language and ſentiment.

Proceeding then upon this plan as well as I am able, by a *ſacrifice for ſin* I underſtand—"A ſacrifice no leſs wiſely than graciouſly ap-"pointed by God, the moral governor of the "world, to expiate the *guilt* of ſin in ſuch man-"ner, as to avert the *puniſhment* of it from the "offender." Such a ſacrifice, on *God*'s part, was a public declaration of his *holy diſpleaſure* againſt ſin on the one hand; (which, by conſequence, ſecured the *honour* of his *juſtice*, and ſo far made *ſatisfaction* to it in the eye of the world) and of his *merciful compaſſion* for the ſinner, on the other hand. Again; ſuch a ſacrifice, on the *offender*'s part, whether offered by himſelf or by another for him, (ſee Job i. 5, &c.) implied a *confeſſion of ſin*, and a deſire of obtaining *pardon* from God. And ſo, upon the due

due performance of the ſervice required, the ſinner was pardoned, and eſcaped the penalty, or puniſhment, incurred by his tranſgreſſion. (See Levit. iv. 20, 26, &c.)

In like manner, the *death* of Chriſt may be properly conſidered under the notion of a *ſacrifice for ſin*. For, according to his own account (Matt. xx. 28.) *he gave his* life *a ranſom for many*: and again (Matt. xxvi. 20.) *his* blood *was ſhed for many for the* remiſſion of ſins. *In whom* (ſays St. *Paul*, Eph. i. 7, 8.) *we have* redemption through his blood the forgiveneſs of ſins, *according to the* riches *of his* (i. e. *God's*) grace: wherein he hath abounded towards us in all *wiſdom* and *prudence*. This was undoubtedly the wiſeſt way, and moſt prudent method, of diſpenſing mercy to ſinners; namely, by means of a *ſacrifice for ſin*; at once to guard them againſt the two dangerous extremes, of *preſumption* on the one hand, and of *deſpair* on the other; and ſo ſtrongly induce them to *be reconciled to God*, or make their peace with him, by complying with the terms of that gracious *covenant* which, with great *propriety*, was ratified and ſealed with the blood of Chriſt, when it was *ſhed for many for the remiſſion of ſins*. Says the great *Stillingfleet**, " no more needs be ſaid, than that God being juſtly *provoked* to puniſh the ſins of mankind, was pleaſed to accept of the ſufferings of his ſon, as a ſufficient ſacrifice of atonement for the *ſins* of the world; on conſideration of which he was pleaſed to offer thoſe terms of *pardon*

* Of the Sufferings of Chriſt, chap. i. ſec. 10.

which upon men's performance of the conditions required on their part, ſhall be ſufficient to diſcharge them from that obligation to *puniſhment* they were under by their ſins."

Agreeably to the foregoing account of the *practical* end and deſign of our Saviour's *propitiatory death* and ſufferings (particularly as *declarative*, in common with all other piacular ſacrifices, of the great *evil of ſin*, and of God's high *diſpleaſure* againſt it, the author of the eſſay before us ſays (p. 180.) "This ſacerdotal office is to put them (viz. ſinners) in mind, that they are ſinful and guilty creatures, raiſe in them proper apprehenſions concerning the great evil of all ſin, to affect them more ſtrongly with the guilt which cleaveth to them, and is the juſt, the natural conſequence of all iniquity; to make them ſenſible of the condemnation and puniſhment they deſerve; and, in a word, work in them a greater abhorrence and dread of ſin, from which Jeſus Chriſt ſuffered and died to *redeem* * them; and thus it becomes an awful, awakening, a zealous, and affectionate call to repentance for paſt tranſgreſſions, and a faithful obedience to God for the future.

All which, I think, ſo far as it goes, is well enough expreſſed. But beſides the great *evil of ſin*, as it were forcibly *driving* them, the *rich mercy* of God kindly *drawing* ſinners to *repentance*,

* As redemption hath a reference to a ſtate of *bondage*, ſo a two-fold redemption is ſpoken of as effected by the death and ſufferings of Chriſt, viz. 1ſt. a redemption from the *guilt*, (Eph i 7.) and a redemption from the *power* of ſin, (Tit. ii. 14.)

may

may be conſidered as equally diſplayed in the inſtitution and execution of Chriſt's mediatorial, or *ſacerdotal office.* This finiſhes and completes the whole wonderful plan; for, as is his *majeſty* ſo is the *mercy* of God. (Sirachid. ii. 18.) And when the doctrine of *repentance* and *remiſſion of ſins*, together, was preached *among all nations*, by his own expreſs order, (Luke xxiv. 47.) in the *name* of Chriſt, the common *advocate* and *propitiation for the whole world*; (1 John ii. 1, 2.) ſuch a doctrine muſt have come with redoubled force upon the heart and conſcience of every ſinner, powerfully operating upon his *hopes*, and upon his *fears* at once. Now, as all *propitiatory ſacrifices*, from the beginning, had naturally the ſame *moral* tendency, uſe, and effect, ſo they might originally owe their being and inſtitution, and ſo by conſequence their virtue and efficacy, to the great ſacrifice of Chriſt, as types of the *ſlain lamb*, (Rev. xiii. 8.) in the comprehenſive ſcheme of divine wiſdom and grace. This preſents to our view one uniform, amazing plan of divine Providence in the diſpenſations of God to mankind, as a fallen race of creatures, from the beginning to the end of the world*.

"Thus (ſays a pious and reſpectable author†, whoſe *words* I ſhall give, and leave the *ſentiments*

* See Hebr ix. 25, 26. Dr. Taylor's Script. Doct. of Atonement, ſec. 134. Dr. Leyland's View of the Deiſtical Writers, vol. ii. page 57, &c.

† Mr. Henry on the Lord's Supper, chap. viii.

to ſpeak for themſelves, after propoſing an elucidation of one particular expreſſion; thus, ſays he) as Chriſt was the *Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world*, in the types and prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and the *application of his merits* to the ſaints that lived *then*; ſo he will be the *Lamb ſlain to the end of the world*, in the word and ſacraments of the New Teſtament, and the *application of his merits* to the ſaints that are *now*, and *ſhall* be in every age. Still he is ſeen, as a *lamb that had been ſlain*; for this ſacrifice does not, like the Old Teſtament ſacrifices, *decay* and *wax old*."

This expreſſion, *the application of his (i. e.* Chriſt's) *merits*, may want a little explication; and it admits of an unexceptionable meaning, if it be rightly underſtood, and properly applied; though it is liable to be taken in a wrong ſenſe, like St. Paul's phraſe of *imputing righteouſneſs*, Rom. iv. 6, &c. Let it then be conſidered, that there is a material difference in the *ſacrifice* of Chriſt, and all thoſe other *ſacrifices for ſin*, which were offered under the law. For, the ſacrifices of *animals*, &c. had no *moral* virtue, or *merit*, in them*. But, in the caſe of our Saviour, the *ſubject* of the ſacrifice was a moral agent. Chriſt himſelf was the prieſt, as well as the ſacrifice; and by a *voluntary*, moſt *pious*, and *benevolent* act of *obedience*, he *offered himſelf without ſpot to God*, Hebr. ix. 14. This important circumſtance, as it eminently *diſ-*

* See Dr. Richie on the peculiar Doctrines of Revel. vol. i. p. 274.

tinguiſhes

tinguiſhes the ſacrifice of Chriſt from all other piacular ſacrifices; ſo it eaſily reconciles two different notions of his *death*, viz. the notion of its being a *ſacrifice for ſin*, in common with other propitiatory offerings; and the further, more peculiar notion of its being a *meritorious act* of obedience to God. In conſequence, and as a *reward* of which, *God hath highly exalted him*, Phil. ii. 9. *Exalted him with his right hand to be a prince and a ſaviour, to* give repentance *to Iſrael, and* forgiveneſs of ſins, Acts v. 31. And as Chriſt is authoriſed to diſpenſe *pardon* to all *penitent* ſinners, ſo he is advanced to the ſingular honour of *appearing for us in the preſence of God*, Hebr. ix. 24. that is to ſay, as our able advocate, Hebr. vii. 25. 1 John ii. 1. For this phraſe, *to appear for us*, is, as a learned writer hath obſerved†, "*Verbum forenſe*, (*i. e.* a forenſic term, or) an expreſſion borrowed from the cuſtom of human courts," &c. And verily it is a ſignal teſtimony to his exalted merit, and a moſt conſpicuous mark of his being high in the favour of God, and having a great intereſt in the court of heaven, that, upon the ground and foundation of our bleſſed Saviour's *advocacy*, or interceſſion, we are directed, and encouraged, to come boldly to the throne of grace, *that we may obtain* mercy, *and find* grace *to help in time of need*, Heb. iv. 14—16. Nor is this all; but as mercy and grace, ſo *glory* too is diſpenſed to us through the miniſtry and mediation of Chriſt. *For the Father hath given him power over all fleſh,*

† Dr. Reynold's on the Prieſthood of Chriſt's Op. p. 509.

that he ſhould give eternal life *to all the legitimate, and duly qualified heirs of ſalvation*, John xvii. 2. Heb. i. 14.

And now, without entangling, or perplexing ourſelves with the difficulty of *transferring* merit, it is eaſy enough to apprehend, upon a calm review of what hath been juſt now ſaid, that through the *merits* of Chriſt, there is a real *communication* of divine benefits unto us; which is all that is neceſſary in this caſe; and all that we need to underſtand by the *application of his merits* before mentioned. And "how agreeable it is to *divine rectitude*, and how ſerviceable to the ends of moral government, and to the cauſe of virtue," that ſuch benefits ſhould be conferred upon us as a reward of Chriſt's *excellent obedience*, and tranſcendent merit. If any one deſires to be particularly informed, let him conſult for his ſatisfaction a valuable treatiſe upon that ſame ſubject*.

APPENDIX.

IT is here thought proper to preſent the reader with the ſentiments of ſome judicious and learned divines, concerning the *nature* and deſign of our Saviour's *death* and ſufferings; which may ſerve to corroborate what hath been ſaid upon that ſubject in the preceding remarks.

"The ſon of God came into the world *on purpoſe to die*; and—his death was *like* the ſacrifices of old, in being the *condition* of pardon,

* Balguy's Eſſay on Redemption.

and

and a ſtanding *evidence* of the *deſert* of ſin, and of the *mercy* of God, and ſo was *truly a ſacrifice.*" *Hallet*'s Notes and Diſcourſes, vol. ii. Diſc. 3.

It is reaſonable that the divine mercy ſhould conſtantly diſplay itſelf in all caſes, which lie within the reach of compaſſion. Such was the caſe of us men, who, though ſinful, yet are weak and frail beings; though offenders, yet are corrigible and capable of amendment. But it is alſo reaſonable that God ſhould be diſpleaſed at the rebellion and tranſgreſſions of his creatures; that he ſhould ſhew his diſapprobation of iniquity, and *ſo* grant his pardon, as at the ſame time to vindicate the honour of his government, and of his laws. Now, this he hath accompliſhed in the moſt illuſtrious manner in the *death* of his ſon, thereby ſhewing his hatred to ſin, in keeping ſinners at a diſtance, and refuſing to hear them in their own name, and in beſtowing his favours only through the mediation of one, who *ſuffered for their offences*, and *roſe again for their juſtification*," &c. *Jortin*'s Diſcourſes on the Chriſtian Religion.

" I conclude, therefore, that the ſacrifice of Chriſt was truly and properly, in the higheſt degree, and far beyond any other, piacular and expiatory, to make *atonement* for, or to *take away* ſin," &c. Taylor's Script. Doct. of Atonement, ſect. 152.

" Suppoſing that ſome diſcovery of this (viz. that God would ſend his ſon into the world in the fulneſs of time, to ſuffer and die for the redemption of mankind, &c.) was made to the

firſt

firſt parents of the human race, after their apoſtacy, as a foundation of their hope and comfort; this gives a moſt reaſonable account of the inſtitution of ſuch a ſacred rite, (viz. of *ſacrifices*) than which nothing could be better fitted to keep up a notion and expectation of a *ſuffering* Redeemer, and to be a conſtant *memorial* to them both of their *own guilt*, and of the *divine mercy*. And hence thoſe *ſacrifices* were very properly accompanied with prayers, confeſſions of ſin, and thanſgivings, and were regarded as federal rites, and tokens of friendſhip and *reconciliation* between God and man." Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers, vol. ii. page 577, &c.

VERUS.

The certainty of a future ſtate of eternal happineſs, though we had not ſeen the book which came down from heaven to ſhew mankind the way thither. In a letter to CLEMENS.

AS we have the higheſt reaſon to conclude, there is one ſupreme, and over-ruling ſpirit, the creator and preſerver of this world, and every thing that exiſts therein; ſo to me it is plain, from the natural light of my underſtanding, that the *ſpirit* called the *ſoul* muſt continue to exiſt after its ſeparation from the body, unleſs it be at that time annihilated by the Almighty and ſupreme ſpirit. His power may put an end to its being, and make it become what we call nothing; but to ſuppoſe he will, appears to me a very extravagant ſuppoſition. It is incompatible

tible with the end and deſign of our being. If there be no future ſtate, it will neceſſarily follow, that man was neither made by God, nor made to any end or purpoſe at all. A monſtrous abſurdity!

The true end of man, and the only reaſon of human life aſſignable, is, to ſerve God here, in order to be happy, in his favour hereafter; for except this be allowed, we never explain why we were made and [illegible]oned after ſuch a manner; and ſhould we [illegible]ppoſe the contrary, the capacities, inclinations and deſigns of our nature, muſt be accounted utterly uſeleſs and vain. If there is no future ſtate, the reaſoning and reflection, the ſpirit of counſel and underſtanding, were given us, only to lengthen out the ſcanty meaſure of a ſpan, and to add a few words to our inſipid tale. This is not credible. Infinite goodneſs muſt have made and diſpoſed us in another manner, if there were no other life but this. If there was not another world, it would be amazing to conſider, that we are ſo curiouſly wrought and put together, and at the ſame time continually ſubject to be broken into duſt again; and ſcattered upon the face of the earth; ſo long before we come to our ſtrength, and ſo much longer before we attain to any conſiderable degree of knowledge; that, during this time, ſo much care and aſſiſtance ſhould be neceſſary to bring us up to ſuch a ſtate; and that after all, when we have eſcaped innumerable dangers in getting thus far, we ſhould have but a ſhort while to enjoy the fruits of our own and other people's

people's labours, and ſhould be continually expoſed to freſh hazards of being ſnatched away, before we came to thoſe bounds which we are ſure we cannot paſs. All this would be ſtrange indeed, if there was not a rational eternity. We could not, in ſuch caſe, have any adequate notions of the exiſtence and nature of the Supreme Being.

But had we a longer and more certain continuance here, yet, why were we born to trouble? Why are we always deſiring and reaching out after happineſs, and yet conſtantly ſubject to pain and miſery? What means all that calamity and affliction which befalls the children of men? If in this life only we have hope, if there be no recompenſe or reward to be expected hereafter, tell me, *Clemens*, why are we ſo ill provided for in this world? Had we no proſpect of a future inheritance, ought not our preſent portion to be better than it now is, if there be a powerful, wiſe, and bountiful being at the helm of the univerſe? Under his adminiſtration, were there no hereafter, the few days we have to live would paſs away without trouble or ſorrow. Whilſt we did live, we ſhould be pleaſed with the good things ſet before us. This we might expect from one another. It is ſo ordered, *Clemens*, in all the other parts of nature.

There are no other beings within our obſervation, which are liable to ſorrow and afflictions but man; at leaſt, he is the only being that knows himſelf to be miſerable, and is capable of complaining that he is ſo. Whatever pain

we

we can ſuppoſe the beaſts that periſh feel, it is all in preſent; they have no concern for what is paſt, nor any apprehenſions for what is to come; and if we were to periſh in the ſame manner as they do, why ſhould not our condition be like theirs, in this reſpect alſo? There muſt be ſome future diſpenſation, or the ſupreme ſpirit, from whom all influence and qualities come, the faculties of activity, volition, and perception, and that ſpiritual influence to which every part of matter within our knowledge appears to be ſubject, would not have diſpoſed us to enquire into the conſequence of things, and to conſider what may happen to us at a great diſtance off. Our ſouls would not be diſquieted within us, by the fears and apprehenſions of evils to come, if there was not an hereafter which concerned us men, and deſerved to be more in our thoughts, than any thing about which we are now employed can do. If death was an abſolute ceſſation of exiſtence, why ſhould we be troubled for any thing that is paſt, and which, by being paſt, could not poſſibly create us the leaſt uneaſineſs, without our own reflection upon it? It is not poſſible to explain this without allowing ſuch a thing as *guilt*; but guilt there can be none, if we are but animated clods of the valley. It is becauſe we are capable of acting ill, and liable to be puniſhed for it, that we are conſcious of pain or anguiſh for what we have done: otherwiſe, our actions would be forgotten, as ſoon as paſt; or we ſhould be as eaſy in remembering them, as we were in doing them. This is ſelf-evident. It appears at once to

thought,

thought, that there muſt be a world to come, or the father of mercies and God of all power, would have formed me like my brother *brute*. He did not, and therefore he made me to be *innocent*, or to *ſin*, as I pleaſed to chuſe,—to be *rewarded* for the one, or *puniſhed* for the other. Upon this ſuppoſition, the conſtruction is fair and godlike. The pain which ariſes from reflecting on iniquity, is not only a ſuitable puniſhment for the offence, but a proper method of exciting man to repent of the evil, and take more care to avoid the like for the future, leſt he ſubject himſelf to puniſhment after death, and forfeit everlaſting happineſs. Thus viewed, human life is reaſonable and charming. As we do, or do not abuſe our liberty,—as we do, or do not anſwer the great purpoſes of God in ſetting up a kingdom amongſt men, we make ourſelves capable of future glory, or muſt expect the high diſpleaſure of our Maker. Thus reaſon informs us. *Future bliſs* or *puniſhment* muſt be the caſe; or *memory* and *reflection* were given us to create *unneceſſary* and *unaccountable torments*, if we be abſolutely deſtroyed after death. But the latter cannot be true, and of conſequence, the deſtruction of man is not total. We only ceaſe, in dying, to be that ſort of being we were before. The mind and its perception will continue, and retain all its ideas, except thoſe which proceeded from ſenſation. The ideas from ſenſation, that is, from ſome motion of the animal ſpirits in the brain, muſt ceaſe, when the brain is no more; but ideas by reflection will be for ever and ever.

Another

Another argument for believing a ſtate of exiſtence after this, without taking in the aſſiſtance of *revelation*, is the univerſal deſire of *immortality*. In all the variable circumſtances of our condition here, we have a natural averſion to death, and find a ſtrong deſire in ourſelves to continue our being for ever. Even the deſpairing wretch, who flies to reſolution and a ball for ſuccour, and embraces the hope of annihilation as his only refuge, even at the very inſtant he dreads an immortality which he fears will be miſerable, and withdraws himſelf from a life which he finds ſo, he wiſhes there was no ſuch reaſon for chuſing death, and preferring the utter extinction of his being; which is a manifeſt argument that he hath not yet cut off the general deſire of immortality. It is impoſſible to ſet bounds to our deſire of living.

Let a man's life be ever ſo long and eaſy, he will always deſire to live, and to be eaſy longer. If we abound and enjoy, we are not willing to depart: or if our preſent eſtate be very low and mean, and we are encompaſſed with difficulties and troubles on every ſide, yet we are ſolicitous to live on, and had rather cheriſh in ourſelves a faint and uncertain hope of being happy ſome time or other, than put an end to all our thoughts and expectations of this nature by death. This is our common caſe.

It is moreover very ſtrange to obſerve, what pains we take to fence againſt this neceſſary and unavoidable law *of dying*; and how many devices and contrivances we have to lengthen out an imaginary life in the memory of other men,

men, when we ourſelves ſhall have no ſenſe or knowledge of any thing that is done under the ſun. This deſire betrays itſelf even in the moſt profeſſed enemies to a future ſtate, and the immortality of the human ſoul. Not able to ſuppreſs the deſire, they only change its object, and from themſelves transfer it to their memory. *Epicurus*, as little as he cared for his ſoul's living out of his body, was willing to believe that his name would live, and when dying, flattered himſelf with the thoughts of ſurviving in the memory of his ſcholars, and with the reputation which his philoſophical works would procure him. And *Horace*, a diſciple of his, built the ſame hope upon his poems—*non omnis moriar, multaque pars mei vitabit Libitinam.*

The force of boiſt'rous winds and mould'ring rain,
Years after years, an everlaſting train,
Shall ne'er deſtroy the glory of my name,
Still ſhall I ſhine in verſe and live in fame:
Here *Libitina* ſhall her power reſign,
And own me in the better part divine.

Or, as *Creech* tranſlates it:

Nor ſating ſhowers, nor north wind's feeble blaſt,
Nor whirling time, nor flight of years can waſte;
Whole *Horace* ſhall not die, his ſongs ſhall ſave,
The greateſt portion from the greedy grave.

Irrational enough I own is this, thus to ſhift the object of the deſire, and laying aſide the reſpect of a real, ſenſible immortality, to ſubſtitute in its room an empty name, a ſound, a phan-

phantom, which can be nothing to us, when we ourſelves are nothing. But it ſhews the *deſire* we cannot vanquiſh the *ſtrictly natural thing*.

Hence it is that the wiſe, the learned, and the great, aim to make themſelves a name, and to be honoured and reſpected in the ages to come. With this view have ſtatues been ſet up, edifices erected, books written, and many difficult and hazardous works performed. Even the loweſt among the people do many things upon this poor proſpect. Men of every rank pleaſe themſelves with thinking, that they ſhall be recommended and talked of after they are gone. But why is all this, if we are ſhut up within the narrow bounds of this world, and cannot paſs from death to life again; if we are going to a land *where all things are forgotten?* Such natural ſentiments and deſires muſt have ſome real foundation. There muſt be ſome future intereſt to purſue, however we may be miſtaken in the nature of what we ſeek for, and too often hunt a mere ſhadow. The deſire we ſee is not only *univerſal*, but *ſtrictly natural:* It was in *innocent* nature, and therefore from the God of nature; and if from God, then given to have it gratified. *Nature never gravitates towards nothing.* All its appetites are matched with ſuitable objects. To ſuppoſe the contrary would imply a defect, not only in the divine *power* or *goodneſs*, but in his *veracity* too.

By the way, you may here ſay, perhaps, that our Maker did not intend the exiſtence of ſuch a *deſire*, and of conſequence could not deſign to have it gratified. Such a deſire in man, whether

God intended it or no, may have a neceſſary connection with the rational faculty, and the principle of ſelf-love. The reaſon that man enjoys will ſtretch its views beyond any given bounds, and acquire an idea of immortality; to this idea add an unextinguiſhable love of ſelf, and man cannot but deſire to be immortal. The deſire then may be where it was not deſigned, and if it was not by God deſigned, he is not engaged to gratify it. This is the objection; and, in your opinion, it is a good one. My argument muſt be given up; for though it be *neceſſary* that we deſire immortality, yet there is no neceſſity that we hope for it. Hope is a mixture of deſire and belief. And if from the *deſire* we will proceed to the *belief* of immortality, we delude ourſelves, and have no cauſe to complain of being impoſed on by our Maker. How do you defend?

I will ſhew you, *Clemens*. The deſire of immortality ſprings *neceſſarily* out of the *reaſon of things*, ſo as to be independent of the divine will; or it does not. If it does not, then God planted it in our breaſts, and interwove it in our frames. He put it into our nature, and did it, to be ſure, with intention to make good a natural or tacit promiſe. This muſt be the truth of the caſe: for the *deſire*, without the *hope*, of immortality would, as things are at preſent ordered, be a torment to the mind. The torture could never be the Deity's deſign.

On the other hand; if the *deſire* ſprings *neceſſarily* out of the *nature of things*, God cannot but approve it, as what is *neceſſary* is good and fitting. The natures and eſſences of things muſt

muſt be entirely agreeable to his will, and of conſequence, his *approbation* of our *deſire* of *immortality*, is, in effect, the ſame as if he *planted* it in the ſoul by an act diſtinct from the creation of the being. It is likewiſe a proof that he hath provided an *object* for a *deſire* that is intirely coincident with his will.

But to proceed; if we will liſten to the inſtructions of univerſal reaſon, ſhe will ſupply us with another argument for a life to come. As God could be under no obligation to exerciſe his creating power, and muſt be the *end* as well as the *author*, of all his own works, it follows, that he made man for his own *glory*. He created him to *worſhip* him, and employ the faculties given him, in his ſervice, as there is no other way for man to promote the glory of the Deity.

This muſt be the caſe, and from thence it follows, that to juſtify the divine honour and wiſdom in making man, God muſt *diſtinguiſh between him that ſerveth him, and him that ſerveth him not*. He muſt prepare ſuch a ſtate of life for man as is ever ſuitable to his nature, and put him into a capacity of enjoying it. It is plain to common ſenſe, that our preſent condition in this world is not ſuch as anſwers all the ends and purpoſes of our being, and therefore God hath appointed ſome other, and better ſtate for us. If we were made to worſhip and obey God, this argument is unanſwerable.

And if we were not, of what uſe is it to us, that we have any knowledge either of him or his laws? Why are our ſouls concerned about the nature and ſucceſs of our actions? Why

does our reaſon enquire how we ſhall be diſpoſed of hereafter? If we are under no obligations of religion by a law of nature, then all ſuch thoughts and conſiderations are vain, and our ſouls are fooliſhly and irregularly contrived. If religion does not belong to us, we ought to have been ſo made, that it had been utterly impoſſible for us to form any notions, or receive any impreſſions of this kind. To be able, by the mere thought of reaſon, to delineate a religion of nature, and live up to every obligation of it, by given powers, and then ceaſe to be, a few years hence,—at one diſſolution, come to an abſolute ceſſation of exiſtence,—this is an aſſertion too ſhocking to be inſiſted on. If the wicked are to fare as well,—better,—than the righteous do in this life, and there never will be any other difference between them hereafter;—if there never is to come a time when I ſhall be made amends for the *ſelf-denial* my given reaſon inclines me to,—then my creation would be the moſt ridiculous thing in the univerſe. What, *Clemens*, the *ſame wages due to ſin and virtue*; and *all things concerning man have an end in death?* It cannot be, as we are the offſpring of ſupreme wiſdom and infinite goodneſs, and made in the manner we are; with ſuch amazing powers of reaſon, as application produces;—witneſs our knowledge in the doctrine of *fluxions*;—there muſt be a hope beyond the grave. Such ſigns of ſentiments, deſires, and tendencies, as we diſcern in our ſouls, cannot be *inſignificant* and *falſe*. It appears from the nature and condition of man, that the *true end* for which he was made,

is

is to ſerve God here, in expectation of ſuch a ſtate of being hereafter, as will be in all reſpects ſuitable to the deſires and capacities of his ſpiritual nature. This is as evident from reaſon as it can be from a goſpel.

And in the next place, to give a fuller proof of the certainty of this natural religion I advance, I will ſhew that all other ends are *unſuitable* and *improper*, or *unattainable*. If we take a ſurvey of man, in all his thoughts and employments, it appears that *life*, *indolence* or *happineſs* are the general end of human purſuit; but the two firſt, in themſelves, are not worth our care, the other not attainable here, and therefore we muſt ſeek for a *future ſtate* by *religion*, the only way to it. This our reaſon points to.

The condition of the far greateſt part of mankind, is to riſe up early and late take reſt, to go forth to their work, and to their labour, until the evening; all their care to have bread to eat, and their *daily bread* to enable them for their *daily labour*; they ſeem to live only for the ſake of life. But this moſt certainly cannot be all they were made for. If their rational ſouls were given them to be intirely employed in providing for their bodies, they are in a much worſe condition than the fowls of the air, who neither ſow nor reap, and yet God feedeth them. If the caſe be thus with men, and their *reaſoning* and *foreſight* are to be laid out *merely* in providing for *life* and *ſubſiſtance*, are they better than other creatures, who are maintained without the help of thought? If all my ſagacity

was but for this painful end, I muſt wiſh I had been a raven: If my ſoul was given me only to ſupport a *houſe of clay, whoſe foundation is in the duſt*, my meaſure is harder than that of the white fox in Greenland. But this was not the end I was created for. It is abſurd to think it. Reaſon aſſures me I was born into time, ſent into this world for a trial of my temper and liberty; that by attending to the ſecret whiſpers of nature, and following the intimations which my Creator hath given me of his will in the very frame of my being; by the practice of all virtue; I may ſecure that future happineſs I deſire. Reaſon crys out, *it cannot be otherwiſe*;—and adds, the very *deſire* of *immortality* was deſigned as a moſt powerful incentive to virtue. This *deſire* grows more vigorous and active as virtue encreaſes, and holds forth to us this obvious inſtruction, that we ſhould make it our chief care and higheſt ambition, to pleaſe that being on whom our own depends, and gain the approbation of the ſupreme diſpoſer, by being *holy*, *juſt* and *good*. Thus reaſon preaches. She is unanſwerable.

But as to my argument; let us turn next to thoſe, who, to the general employment of preſerving life, add the care of living eaſy and free from trouble, ſtudy to *lay* or *prevent pain*, by procuring what we call pleaſure and ſatisfaction. The men of this claſs, exempted from the toil and labour to which the reſt of their brethren are condemned, move on conſtantly in a round of little inſignificant actions, and keep their minds always eaſy and unbent. Their aim is to guard againſt vexation and pain, and paſs through

through life gently and ſmoothly;—their ſtudy to keep their ſouls quiet and free from any ſhock or diſturbance. And what do they get by all this? If they live but juſt to avoid that trouble and diſquiet to which mortals are expoſed, there is not much difference between *life* and *death*; only *death* would be the ſecurer ſtate. Hence the men of pleaſure, notwithſtanding their riches, are ſometimes very miſerable by accidents and maladies; but in the grave, if there be no exiſtence after this, they would be for ever void of ſorrow and pain, and, were a choice poſſible, might think it better not to be at all. In this caſe, where is the wiſdom and advantage of their being? Or was it for the honour of God to make them? The truth is, there is no happineſs in this life without taking religion and a future ſtate into the account. Such are the troubles and miſeries of human life, which do either immediately cleave to our nature, or reſult from the ordinary courſe of ſociety, that very few can ſay the *good* exceeds the *evil*. I am ſure I cannot. But my comfort is, that *nature* preſcribes relief. If the *dictates* of *reaſon* are obeyed, and the *inclinations* to *ſenſe* diſregarded, we find that, religion can countervail the afflictions ariſing from conſtitution, ſociety, virtue and vice. This gives a fair title to happineſs, though it may be many times ſo ordered, that the virtuous man is of all men the moſt miſerable here. But this ſignifies nothing. Our frame and conſtitution is an irrefragable argument of the wiſdom, benevolence and excellent moral diſpoſition of the author of our

nature, and of the generous adminiſtration which prevails over his works. As we are endowed by the God who made us with very noble powers, and are placed in an excellent ſituation for their improvement, to a very high pitch of perfection and happineſs, it is a demonſtration that we ſhall be crowned hereafter, with glory and honour. This is unanſwerable.

To conclude; ſuppoſing no pain or trouble can reach us in this world, no joy or pleaſure paſs by us, that we are placed in as advantageous a poſt as the heart of man can wiſh; yet as there is no *ſecurity* or *continuance* for this, theſe defects muſt leſſen the reliſh of the things we enjoy. The apprehenſions muſt become painful, and we cannot be really happy. It follows then, to anſwer the *deſires* of our ſouls, that we turn to ſome *future ſtate*, which ſhall be *endleſs* and *unchangeable*. Without this ſtate, we live here to no purpoſe, and may complain that we entered into life at all. Man, in ſuch caſe, has reaſon to ſay, he was *ill-contrived*, or *made in vain*; and he is the only creature that has cauſe to lament his condition, that he was *irregularly* and *unſkilfully put together:* if there be no *bliſs to come*, to make amends for his *ſufferings* through life, or for the *narrow bounds* the comforts of life were confined in. *Poor unhappy race of mankind*, if there be no *immortality!* The *foxes* and the *ravens* may rejoice in their creation; but we muſt mourn. And can this be, if there is a God? It is not to be conceived that the Father of the univerſe would put it into our power to expoſtulate with him, for having

having made and faſhioned us after ſuch a manner, and not find a way to ſatisfy all our objections; or that he ſhould not be able to juſtify his providence to every being, that is in a condition to find fault, either with his works, or his appointments. What do you ſay, *Clemens?* Do you not begin to think it looks fair and promiſing on their ſide, who believe a ſtate of exiſtence after this, without taking in the aſſiſtance of revelation?

But to go a little further; the *vanity* and *abſurdity* of *human nature* without *immortality*, does further appear, by obſerving, that all the *common judgments of mankind*, relating to their *being* and *conduct* in this world, which have hitherto been eſteemed *unqueſtionable*, muſt be pronounced *falſe*, if there be *no rewards and puniſhments* in ſome world to come. The common notions or unconfeſſed principles in life are theſe; that it is better *to be*, than *not to be*; that it is more for our real advantage to take *reaſon* for our principal guide than *ſenſe*; that *wiſdom* excelleth *folly*, and *knowledge* is more deſirable than *ignorance*; and that it conduces more to the happineſs of mankind, to live in *ſociety*, under *government and law*, than to live wild, in a pure ſtate of nature. Theſe paſs for truths; and yet if there be *no future appointments for man*, they are moſt certainly falſe. This I may perhaps evince in another letter; for the obſervations are too long to be added to this.

Auguſt 28, 1769. JOHN BUNCLE, Eſq.

To

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

SO many have been the ſchemes of harmonizing the four goſpels, and ſo little general ſatisfaction has any of them given to the learned, that a new attempt of the kind muſt appear very unpromiſing, and will hardly gain a ſufficient degree of attention. From a general idea of the great uncertainty, or at leaſt the great difficulty of this ſubject, I myſelf thought the time to be thrown away that was employed in an inquiry into it; till accidentally meeting with *Mr. Mann's Diſſertations on the Times of the Birth and Death of Chriſt*, and finding there the outlines of a harmony, upon very different principles from any that I had ſeen before, I was induced to conſider this buſineſs with ſome attention; and after weighing his arguments, I was as much ſtruck with the marks of probability and truth they carried with them, as I had been at firſt with their novelty only. Upon this I ſet about drawing out a harmony from his general hints, and in the courſe of this work, a variety of other arguments occurred to me in favour of Mr. Mann's ſcheme, as well as reaſons that induced me to depart from his diſpoſition of ſome of the events in the hiſtory of our Lord. The reſult of all my diſquiſitions on this ſubject, I beg leave to lay before the public, by the channel of your repoſitory, in four or five *Eſſays*; and I ſhall be very glad to hear any objections

jections that may be made to any thing I ſhall advance.

The harmony of the goſpels is by no means a matter of indifference to chriſtianity. The evidence of the evangelical hiſtory is concerned in it, in a variety of reſpects. If the different hiſtories of the life of Chriſt be utterly irreconcileable in things of conſequence, *i. e.* in things of ſuch a nature, as that perſons who lived in thoſe times, and who undertook to write an account of them, could not but be well acquainted with, and have attended to, they will none of them be credible. On the other hand, if they agree in every minute particular, and arrange every incident in the ſame order, they will be ſuſpected of having written in concert; and all their credit, as independent evidences, will be loſt.

I flatter myſelf that the reſult of my obſervations will exhibit the evidence of the goſpel hiſtory in the cleareſt and ſtrongeſt point of light; as they will ſhew ſuch an agreement of the four hiſtorians in things of conſequence, and at the ſame time ſuch a variation and diſagreement in things of little or no conſequence, as are, in fact, found in all the moſt credible hiſtories; ſo that an unbeliever will ſee, that the evidence of the hiſtory of Chriſt is exactly of the ſame nature with that of Julins Cæſar, or any other perſon of antiquity, the particulars of which are never called in queſtion. I very much approve of the obſervations of your correſpondent *Paulinus* on this ſubject, vol. i. p. 141, &c.

I may

I may add, that this ſubject of the goſpel harmony cannot but intereſt the curioſity of every chriſtian, and eſpecially of perſons who have a taſte for criticiſm and antiquities. What pains have been taken, by claſſical critics, to aſcertain the exact dates of the moſt trivial incidents in the life of Cicero, and other perſons of eminence, in ancient and modern hiſtory. The motive to all this pains could be nothing but the *intereſt* they took, and which they imagined their readers would take, in the lives of thoſe heroes, and the deſire, that unavoidably reſults from it, of having as preciſe and definite an idea as poſſible, of every thing in which they were concerned.

And are not chriſtians particularly intereſted in the hiſtory of Chriſt, whoſe life we conſider as of infinitely more conſequence to us, and to all mankind, than that of any other perſon that ever figured on the theatre of the world? If we really think, and feel ourſelves thus intereſted in the life of our Saviour, and conſequently frequently reflect upon it, we cannot help wiſhing to come at the moſt ſatisfactory knowledge of every thing related of him, whether it be of more, or of leſs conſequence; and it will give us pleaſure to be able to fix the time and place of the moſt minute incident relating to it. I appeal to the feelings of all theſe who intereſt themſelves in the hiſtory of the dead.

It may recommend this ſubject to ſcholars and philoſophers to obſerve, that it affords as much room

room for the diſplay of critical ſagacity, as any other ſubject whatever. I am, Gentlemen,

Your conſtant Reader,

LIBERIUS.

ESSAY I.

A general view of Mr. MANN*'s hypotheſis concerning the duration of* Chriſt*'s miniſtry.*

AS the obſervations I have made on the harmony of the goſpels will hardly be intelligible, or at leaſt will appear to great diſadvantage without a previous knowledge of the evidence of Mr. Mann's hypotheſis (which I believe is very little known) I ſhall prefix to them a general view of his arguments.

This learned writer ſeems to have ſurprized the critics of the laſt generation with what is generally called his *ſtrange hypotheſis*, concerning the duration of our Lord's public miniſtry, ſince he confines it to little more than one year; whereas it is commonly ſuppoſed to have continued three or four years.

The immediate and proper object of Mr. Mann is to aſcertain the time of our Lord's birth and death. The former of theſe he fixes in the year of the Julian period 4707. U. C. 747; and the latter P. J. 4739, U. C. 779, or 26 years of the vulgar chriſtian æra; and ſince it muſt be allowed that Jeſus was thirty years old at the beginning of his miniſtry, theſe dates will not admit of its continuing more than

than a year and a few months. But this hypotheſis he thinks he can ſupport on independent evidence. To do the more juſtice to his ſcheme, I ſhall give a ſummary view of the arguments he produces in ſupport of the above-mentioned date of our Lord's death. It is, indeed, upon theſe, chiefly, that his proof of the ſhort continuance of his public miniſtry reſts.

1. According to Mr. Mann's interpretation of the prophecy of Daniel, the Meſſiah was to be cut off after 7 weeks, and 62 weeks, or in the beginning of the 70th week (or 483 years) after the commandment given to Cyrus to rebuild Jeruſalem in P. J. 4256; and theſe numbers added together make 4739, as mentioned above. It was in this 70th week that a covenant was to be confirmed with many of the Jewiſh nation, and the hiſtory of it is related in the 9 firſt chapters of the book of Acts; for during the firſt ſeven years (that is, in prophetic language, a week) after the death of Chriſt the goſpel was preached to none but the Jews.

2. From all the characters of time mentioned by Luke iii. 1. (and by which the primitive fathers thought he meant to fix the time of the paſſion, and not of the baptiſm of Chriſt) it happened in the 12th year of the reign of Tiberius, after the death of Auguſtus, which was P. J. 4739. U. C. 779.

3. At the paſſover in which our Lord ſuffered, the Jews obſerved that the temple had been building 46 years, which reckoned from the time that Herod began to repair it, viz. P. J. 4693, fixes it at the ſame year 4739.

4. Our

4. Our Lord ſuffered on a Friday, which was that year the day of the paſſover; and according to the genuine method of computing time, and fixing the paſſover among the Jews (deſcribed by Rabbi Samuel) the paſſover did fall on a Friday in the year 4739; and, excepting again in the 19th of Tiberius, P. J. 4746, or 33 of the vulgar æra, on no other year, from A. D. 25, to A. D. 34; and though Scaliger has choſen the latter of theſe dates for the time of our Lord's paſſion, he appears not to have been ſatisfied with it, becauſe it obliged him to extend the preaching of Chriſt to four years, or five paſſovers. And Uſher and others, if they will be conſiſtent with themſelves, muſt, on the ſame ſuppoſition, extend it ſtill farther.

5. The year 4739 may be inferred to have been the true year of the death of Chriſt from the ſynodical epiſtle of the council of Cæſarea, aſſembled A. D. 195, in which it is ſaid, that the crucifixion was on the 11th of the calends of April, or March 22.

That our Lord preached only one year and a few months (which will make him to have wanted ſome months of being thirty-one years of age in P. J. 4737.) Mr. Mann thinks to be evident from the following remarks, as well as thoſe which fix his birth to the year 4707, and his death to 4739.

1. Luke, in the hiſtory of Chriſt, mentions only two epochs, that of his birth, and that of his baptiſm; and therefore was with reaſon underſtood, by the Fathers, to comprehend in the

ſecond

ſecond epoch his death with his baptiſm, both happening within the compaſs of the ſame year, or but a few months more. To this may be added the probability, that this evangeliſt mentioned both Annas and Caiaphas as high prieſts, becauſe Annas was in that office for the year 4738, in which was moſt of the preaching and miracles of Chriſt, and Caiaphas for the year 4739, in the firſt quarter of which our Lord ſuffered.

2. Admitting, on account of its own independent evidence, that Chriſt died P. J. 4739; his baptiſm, which preceded his public miniſtry, and which Luke ſays was during the adminiſtration of Pilate, could not have been forty months before his crucifixion; becauſe Pilate came not into Judea till the 11th year of Tiberius, which began in Auguſt P. J. 4737.

3. The paſſage of Iſaiah lxi. 12. which our Lord read in the ſynagogue at Nazareth, and which he notified to be then fulfilled *(The ſpirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to preach* THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR *of the Lord)* was anciently thought to ſignify, that Chriſt was to preach but one year, diſtinguiſhed by that name.

4. The moſt learned of the primitive Fathers, and thoſe who lived neareſt to the times of the apoſtles, were, for the moſt part, perſuaded that Chriſt preached but one year. Of this opinion were Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, Origen, Africanus, Lactantius; and before all thoſe, Valentinus the heretic, and Juſtin Martyr.

5. Matthew, Mark and Luke evidently ſuppoſe the preaching of only one year; and even

John's

John's goſpel, which alone has been thought to ſuppoſe more, will not, in fact, be found to do ſo. For he mentions only one ſummer and one winter. He deſcribes the events of only two paſſovers, one pentecoſt, one feaſt of tabernacles, and one feaſt of dedication; and he mentions them in their natural order, if we ſuppoſe that the 6th chapter of this evangeliſt hath been tranſpoſed out of its proper place, and that it ſhould precede the 5th. But the marks of the tranſpoſition he thinks to be evident.

1. The laſt words of chap. v. are mentioned as ſpoken by Jeſus in Jeruſalem, and the words immediately following them, in chap. vi. without any introduction or preparation whatever, repreſent him paſſing out of Galilee to the eaſtern ſide of the ſea of Tiberius; but this is an eaſy ſequel of the 4th chapter, which left him in Galilee. Again, the end of the 5th chapter has the ſame eaſy connection with the beginning of the 7th, that the end of the 4th has with the beginning of the 6th. For in chap. v. 16 and 18. Jeſus, in Jeruſalem, is reaſoning with the Jews, who were ſeeking to kill him; and the 7th chapter opens with an account of his going into Galilee, becauſe the Jews ſought to kill him. But as the chapters ſtand at preſent, the 6th repreſents him teaching at Capernaum, in Galilee; and yet the 7th begins with theſe words, *After theſe things Jeſus walked in Galilee*, as if he had been juſt arrived there from ſome other territory.

2. The paſſovers, as the chapters are now ranged, are multiplied beyond all probability:

for chap. iv. 45. Jeſus appears to be juſt returned from the firſt paſſover, and cures the nobleman's ſon at Capernaum; and at the end of nine verſes more, v. 1. he is gone back to the ſecond paſſover (as ſome reckon it) and nothing more is ſaid of him during the remainder of that firſt year. From this imaginary paſſover, v. 1. when Jeſus healed the cripple at the pool of Betheſda, to the feaſt of Tabernacles, vii. 2. that is, according to the modern account, during all the ſecond year, the third paſſover, and half the third year, he is only ſaid to have worked one miracle, and the next day to have taught in Capernaum; and nothing more is ſaid of him for all the reſt of the ſuppoſed eighteen months. Now doth it ſeem at all probable, that any perſon, profeſſing to write the hiſtory of Chriſt's public miniſtry, during the ſpace of about three years, ſhould omit near two years and a half of that time?

3. It appears that Jeſus retired to the deſart of Bethſaida upon the death of John the Baptiſt, and there fed the five thouſand. This is mentioned John vi. 5; and yet, in ver. 35, Jeſus, at Jeruſalem ſpeaks of him as of one who had been dead ſome time before. *He was a burning and a ſhining light.* But to this argument of Mr. Mann it may be replied, that it might refer to John's being in priſon, as well as to his being dead.

It may be objected to the whole of Mr. Mann's hypotheſis, that to John vi. 4. we read, *and the paſſover, a feaſt of the Jews, was nigh.* But it cannot be ſuppoſed that John wrote ſo; becauſe

becauſe he had mentioned the paſſover in chap. ii. and even related ſeveral of the events of it; and therefore could not ſuppoſe that his readers would want an explanation of the term in that place. Gerard Voſſius, therefore, and other critics, would read, *and a feaſt of the Jews was nigh*, and imagine that the word *paſſover* was firſt added, as a conjectural explanation of ſome perſon or other. However the ancient fathers could never have imagined, as they did, that Chriſt preached only one year, if this third paſſover had been ſo expreſsly mentioned in their copies of this goſpel. Beſides, there is no mention of Chriſt's aſſiſting at any third paſſover.

ESSAY II.

Other arguments in favour of Mr. MANN's *hypotheſis.*

TO the arguments which Mr. Mann has alledged in favour of his hypotheſis, that the miniſtry of Chriſt continued only one year, I would add the following conſiderations.

1. Some very ſhort periods of our Lord's public miniſtry appear, according to the accounts of all the evangeliſts, to have been very full of buſineſs. He ſeems to have been almoſt inceſſantly employed in teaching, in healing great numbers of diſeaſed perſons, and performing other miraculous works; and from the manner in which the evangeliſts deſcribe his uſual way of life, it ſhould ſeem that the greateſt part of his time was thus fully employed. He conti-

nually went about doing good, making it *his meat and his drink to do the will of his heavenly Father.*

If, now, our Lord had paſſed three or four years in this manner, and the twelve apoſtles had alſo been teaching and working miracles in ſix different places for the ſpace of a year or more, in that ſmall country, and the ſeventy alſo, in 35 places more, for the ſame ſpace of time, as is generally ſuppoſed; ſuch a number of miracles would have been performed, as we cannot but think, muſt have exceeded every proper purpoſe of them. Either there could have been no unbelievers left in Judea; or, if the tendency of the miracles had been to exaſperate, ſuch a reſentment would have been raiſed in the minds of the Jewiſh rulers, as, without a greater miracle than any of the reſt, could not but have terminated in his death long before. For my own part, inſtead of thinking a ſingle year not to have been ſufficient for the purpoſe of our Lord's miſſion, I rather wonder, conſidering in what manner he ſpent his time, that the incredulity of the people could hold out, or the malice of his enemies could be reſtrained ſo long as one year.

Conſidering the violent prejudices, that ſuch a people as the Jews muſt have had againſt the pretenſions of a Meſſiah, who made the appearance that Jeſus did, one may indeed imagine, that the bulk, or the more depraved and worldly-minded of them, might withſtand the evidence of miracles performed in one year; but hardly any degree of incredulity can be ſuppo-

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ſed to ſtand out againſt the thouſands, and ten thouſands of miracles, that muſt have been wrought upon the common hypotheſis.

1. It is alſo more eaſy to account for the prejudices of the apoſtles, and their ignorance of the true nature of Chriſt's kingdom, even at, and after our Lord's death, on the ſuppoſition that his miniſtry was of a ſhort, than that it were of a long duration.

2. If our Lord really preached three or four years; and, conſequently, if the evangeliſts have ſometimes paſſed over all the events of whole years at a time, is it not ſurpriſing, that none of them ſhould ever connect thoſe very diſtant parts of their narrative by ſuch phraſes as *the year following*; *after one*, or *after two years*, &c. &c. The ſeaſons of the year are ſometimes particularly diſtinguiſhed, and we find the exact number of days that intervened between two events carefully noted; but nothing that implies ſuch chaſms as are commonly ſuppoſed to be in the evangelical hiſtory. Their uſual tranſition, *after theſe things*, or *afterwards* cannot be conſtrued to mean *after a year or two*.

3. If Jeſus had been preaching and working miracles, both in Judea and in Galilee, almoſt a year before the death of John the Baptiſt, agreeable to the common hypotheſis, Herod, who reigned in Galilee, could not but have heard of him; and therefore could not but have known that he was not John that was raiſed from the dead, as in Matt. xiv. 1. Whereas, if we ſuppoſe that Jeſus had preached only a few weeks before the death of John, we may

imagine, that, engaged as Herod was in a multiplicity of buſineſs and pleaſure, he might not have heard of him till that time; and therefore might, with ſome plauſibility, conjecture, as he did, that he was John riſen from the dead.

4. All our Lord's journeys, that the evangeliſts give us any account of, agree in ſo many circumſtances, that they are evidently the ſame, and are ſuppoſed to be ſo by all the harmoniſts. Now ſince theſe four hiſtorians have ſelected very different events in our Saviour's life, is it not ſurpriſing, that all his journeys to Jeruſalem make no more than four; three of which, at leaſt, every pious Jew was obliged to make in the compaſs of every year? Our Lord muſt have made that journey three or four times as often, in three or four years, and it may well be ſuppoſed that ſomething remarkable muſt have happened in ſeveral of them, beſides thoſe four. John, who ſupplies many of the deficiencies of the other evangeliſts, only makes up the number of them to four. He ſupplies many new diſcourſes, and new incidents, but no more journeys to Jeruſalem than thoſe abovementioned.

If we read the hiſtory of the evangeliſts with attention, we ſhall find ſeveral ſmall periods of time, as was obſerved before, exceedingly crowded with buſineſs, particularly a week or two on his appearance in Galilee, after the firſt paſſover, and a week before his death. If only a month or two of the year were ſpent in this manner, all the buſineſs that is recorded in all the evangeliſts might have been tranſacted in it;

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ſo that, even upon this hypotheſis, we muſt ſuppoſe great omiſſions in our Lord's hiſtory, according to the teſtimony of John.

It may be objected to the hypotheſis I am maintaining, that though it is poſſible, that all the events, that are expreſsly mentioned in the hiſtory of our Lord, might have been comprehended within the compaſs of one year, yet that ſeveral *circumſtances*, and *expreſſions* alſo lead us to ſuppoſe, that more is ſuppreſſed, than could be brought within that ſpace of time; particularly our Lord's tarrying and making diſciples in Judea before he went to Galilee, after the firſt paſſover, John iii. 22; his dwelling at Capernaum, Matt. iv. 13; and his going about all Galilee, teaching in their ſynagogues, v. 23. on the ſabbath days, Luke iv. 31. It is alſo ſaid, that the miſſions of the Twelve, and of the Seventy, muſt have taken up more time than can be allowed for them on this hypotheſis. I ſhall therefore conſider all theſe caſes a little particularly; and the illuſtration I ſhall give of them may perhaps aſſiſt us to underſtand the force of ſimilar expreſſions, when they occur elſewhere.

Though John ſpeaks of our Lord's tarrying in Judea, after the firſt paſſover, and before his going into Galilee, iii. 22. and making more diſciples there than John did at the ſame time, yet ſeveral circumſtances make it evident, that his ſtay in Judea at that time could not have been long. For not only do the other evangeliſts make no mention of this ſtay in Judea; but the manner in which they all relate

the hiſtory of the firſt tranſactions in Galilee, ſhews that they had no idea of any thing conſiderable having been done before.

Matthew ſays, iv. 7. that it was after his coming to Capernaum that *Jeſus began to preach and to ſay, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

Mark i. 11. repreſents the great fame of Jeſus in Galilee to have ariſen from the miracle which he performed in the ſynagogue at Capernaum, on the day that he healed Peter's wife's mother.

Luke cloſely connects his account of the temptation with that of his preaching in Galilee, ſaying, iv. 14. *And Jeſus returned in the power of the ſpirit into Galilee, and there went a fame of him through all the region round about.*

From the hiſtory of the tranſactions at the firſt paſſover, it is evident, that the phariſees were, at that time, very attentive to our Lord's conduct; ſo that his making diſciples in the neighbourhood of Jeruſalem cannot be ſuppoſed to have eſcaped their notice many days: from which we may conclude, that whatever effect our Lord's apprehenſions from the Jews could have had, muſt have been produced very ſoon, probably in leſs than a week. Having been baptiſed in that country, and been ſo particularly pointed out by John there, he could not be long in making diſciples enow to alarm the Jews.

Laſtly, Peter and Andrew, James and John, the firſt of our Lord's diſciples, did not particularly attend upon him till after his arrival in Galilee; which I think is a preſumption, that he

had

had not ſpent much time in preaching elſewhere; a great part of our Lord's buſineſs being to inſtruct his apoſtles, and train them up to their future ſervices in the church.

Matthew, indeed, mentions Jeſus's *dwelling* at Capernaum; but he could not mean that he reſided there for any long time together; ſince our Lord himſelf ſufficiently intimated, that he had no fixed habitation during his public miniſtry, when he ſaid, Matt. viii. 20. *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have neſts; but the ſon of man hath not where to lay his head.* It is poſſible that the meaning of Matthew might be, that our Lord's family, *i. e.* his mother and brethren, removed to Capernaum about that time, as they are expreſsly ſaid to have done by John, ii. 12. a little before the paſſover, though they did not make a long ſtay at that time, but went up to the feaſt. We alſo afterwards find Jeſus's mother and brethren at Capernaum, and the neighbourhood, when his brethren are expreſsly ſaid not to have been his diſciples.

Or, perhaps our Lord's dwelling at Capernaum may only mean that it was the place where he moſt frequently was during his ſtay in Galilee. And we do, indeed, find that this town was, as it were, the center of our Lord's buſineſs, and the *terminus* of all his journeys.

But notwithſtanding this, we may infer that Capernaum did by no means particularly engage the attention of Jeſus, from his joining Chorazin and Bethſaida with it, in the woe he pronounced upon thoſe places in which his mighty

mighty works had been chiefly done, for not improving the opportunities his preſence had afforded them.

2. As to our Lord's *preaching in all the ſynagogues of Galilee*, mentioned Matt. xiv. 13. the time that he was abſenr from Capernaum, on that very progreſs, does not admit of its being underſtood literally. For Mark, deſcribing the very ſame progreſs, in language ſimilar to that of Matthew; ſaying, i. 33. that *he left Capernaum to go to the next towns to preach there alſo*, and that *he preached in their ſynagogues through all Galilee, and caſt out devils*; yet ſays, ii. 1. that *he entered again into Capernaum, after ſome days only.*

Beſides, theſe general expreſſions concerning Chriſt's preaching in all the town's of Galilee, though introduced in this particular place, may refer to all the time that he paſſed in that country, in which is probable that few of the places eſcaped him, or his diſciples; and that he omitted no opportunity of preaching in the ſynagogues, wherever he could conveniently go.

Luke, indeed, ſays, iv. 31. that *when Jeſus came down to Capernaum, he taught them on the ſabbath days*, τοις σαββασι; from which ſome infer, that he ſpent ſeveral ſabbaths there at that time; and Dr. Doddridge, in enumerating the objection to Mr. Mann's hypotheſis, ſeems to lay ſtreſs on this circumſtance. But there are ſeveral inſtances in the New Teſtament, in which the plural of σαββατον is uſed for the ſingular, as in Matt. xxviii. 1. οψε δε σαββατων, which we render *in the end of the ſabbath*. Indeed it could not have been rendered otherwiſe; for it means that one particular

particular ſabbath, in which our Lord lay in the grave. Mark iii. 23. *And it came to paſs that he went through the corn-fields on the ſabbath day.* εν τοις σαββασι. Alſo this evangeliſt Luke, xiii. 10. *And he was teaching in the ſynagogue on the ſabbath,* εν τοις σαββασιν.

But the moſt deciſive argument is derived from the parallel part of the hiſtory, as related by Mark i. 21. who makes uſe of the ſame expreſſion with Luke, in relating the ſame events of the ſame day. *And they went into Capernaum, and ſtraightway on the ſabbath day* [τοις σαββασιν] *he entered into the ſynagogue.* Then follows the hiſtory of the cure of the demoniac, and of Peter's wife's mother, &c. exactly as in Luke. It is evident, therefore, that Luke meant only *one day*, though he uſes the plural number, and the very ſame day that Mark doth, whoſe expreſſion (the ſame with that of Luke) we tranſlate in the ſingular number.

3. The miſſion of the Twelve is generally ſuppoſed to have taken up a conſiderable time; but from the circumſtances in which it is related by all the evangeliſts it doth not appear that the apoſtles could have been abſent more than about a week, on that occaſion.

According to Matthew, all that intervened between the miſſion of the Twelve, and their return (intimated by the tranſactions in which we find the diſciples with our Lord) is the diſcourſe concerning John; and all that intervened between them, according to Mark and Luke, is the very ſame diſcourſe, and the alarm of Herod on hearing of the miracles of Jeſus; though they

they place both the miſſion of the Twelve, and the diſcourſe concerning John, in different parts of the general hiſtory.

If it be ſaid that the charge which our Lord gave them, Matt. x. is too particular, and too ſolemn, for ſo ſhort an excurſion; I anſwer, that, upon any ſuppoſition, the charge he gave them on that occaſion will be found to reſpect ſeveral circumſtances, that could not happen in that particular miſſion, but muſt refer to their general miſſion afterwards; eſpecially what he ſays concerning their behaviour when carried before magiſtrates and kings, and concerning perſecution unto death.

4. Luke is the only evangeliſt who mentions the miſſion of the Seventy; and he ſays, x. 1. it was during our Lord's journey to Jeruſalem, when he took his final leave of Galilee, and that *they were ſent into every place where he himſelf ſhould come*; and he ſpeaks of their return in the ſeventeenth verſe of the ſame chapter, before he mentions his arrival at Jeruſalem. It is evident, from the circumſtances of the hiſtory, that our Lord made this journey more privately than any others, and arrived at Jeruſalem in the middle of the feaſt, which was that of tabernacles. Perhaps, therefore, he diſmiſſed his train, partly with a view to travel with leſs appearance of oſtentation; and they might only go to theſe places through which he himſelf intended to paſs, in his road to Jeruſalem at that time. Though, it is poſſible, however, he might mean the places where he ſhould come afterwards, in the ſtay he, from that time, made in Judea;

Judea; but ſtill, being ſo many of them, and going *two and two*, they would ſoon have viſited every place in that ſmall country. And if they followed the example of our Lord, in his excurſions from Capernaum, they ſtayed a very ſhort time in any place, probably ſeldom more than one day.

But all thoſe particulars will perhaps be ſeen in a ſtronger point of light, in the laſt of theſe four Eſſays, in which I ſhall give a ſuccinct view of all the events in our Lord's hiſtory, in the order of time; and collect all the notes of times, and other marks of tranſition, that are preſerved in any of the evangeliſts. This is ſuch a view as, I flatter myſelf, will ſhew not only the poſſibility, but alſo the probability of this ſcheme of a harmony, in a manner independent of all other arguments in its favour.

Before I conclude this Eſſay, I ſhall anſwer two more objections, that may be made to this hypotheſis, from the face of the hiſtory.

1. When our Lord was diſcourſing with his diſciples at the well, in his journey to Galilee, he ſays, John iv. 35. *Say ye not, There are four months, and then cometh harveſt.* This, according to ſome critics (and among them Sir Iſaac Newton) implies that, at the time of this journey, it wanted four months to the harveſt; and conſequently muſt have been ſome time in December, which by no means ſuits Mr. Mann's hypotheſis. But I would obſerve, that this time of the year doth not at all agree with what is generally, and with great probability, ſuppoſed, that the heat of the weather, concurred with the fatigue

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of travelling to increaſe the thirſt our Lord complained of; but that it agrees remarkably well with the ſuppoſition of this journey having been made about a week after the paſſover, or about the middle of April; eſpecially as it is ſaid, John iv. 6. to have been the ſixth hour of the day, or noon. Wherefore Grotius, Whitby, and many other commentators, ſuppoſe that our Lord quoted a known proverbial expreſſion, which implied, that four months generally interved between ſeed time and harveſt. And whether there was ſuch a proverbial expreſſion current among the Jews or not, I cannot help thinking there was a peculiar propriety in the obſervation at that time. Our Lord, in his converſation with the woman, had, as it were, been ſowing the ſeed of the word; and he foreſaw the immediate effect of it. He therefore ſays, Four months commonly intervene between ſeed time and harveſt; but I have only juſt now ſown, and, lifting up your eyes, you will ſee, by the multitudes crouding to us, that the fields are already white for my harveſt.

2. The other objection ariſes from the *much graſs* that is ſaid to have been in the place where our Lord fed the five thouſand; and which, it is thought, doth not well agree with the time of the year in which Mr. Mann places this event. But Mr. Mann places it before pentecoſt, and it might be about the latter end of April, or the beginning of May that year; and though the greateſt part of the graſs of Judea be burnt up *in* the month of May, it is not very improbable, that, in ſome favourable ſituation, ſome

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might remain, and even be *green* in the *beginning* of the month; ſuppoſing it to have been ſo late. As it is not the cuſtom to mow the graſs for hay in that part of the world, if there had been any graſs in the place, it would probably have remained there all the ſummer, it being a deſert place; and Mark, who was not preſent, is the only evangeliſt who mentions its being green.

p 102.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

MY former letter concerning *apoſtolical inflictions of temporal puniſhments* was ſuch, it ſeems, as to merit the attention of your learned correſpondents; two of whom have honoured it with their anſwers—Had I thought the ſolution of the difficulty given by either of them ſatisfactory, you had not been troubled with this.

My thanks, however, are due to them for the pains taken to relieve me, in a point which had not a little embarraſſed me, and ſtill does. The corporal and capital inflictions objected to, as *indiſcreet exertions of power*, the learned anſwerers aſcribe to the *immediate act of God*, particularly the affair of Ananias and Sapphira, in which they tell us Peter had no hand, either *intentionally* or *actually*; and yet the apoſtles are expreſsly ſaid to be the *inſtruments* of thoſe inflictions; with what conſiſtency is left to their own

own conſideration. If the death of thoſe two perſons was miraculous (as is generally allowed) the *power*, if they pleaſe was *God*'s, the *miracle* was *Peter*'s. If it was not miraculous, how do they account for that *great fear which came upon the church, and upon as many as heard thoſe things?* A perſon dropping down dead could be no ground of general conſternation, for it is a common caſe, at leaſt often falls out in the courſe of providence; whereas their conſidering it as the miraculous infliction of the apoſtle, was a juſt foundation of fear; and in this light I think it more than probable that they did conſider it.

The immediate act of God, into which the inflictions under conſideration are reſolved, is an ambiguous phraſe, and ought to have had a preciſe and determinate meaning affixed to it, becauſe it is capable of very different ones. I ſhall only obſerve at preſent, that if they conſider the *immediate act of God*, in miraculous inflictions and operations, as contra-diſtinguiſhed from all human and viſible inſtrumentality (which ſeems to be their idea) I know not what muſt become of the New Teſtament miracles, or with what propriety our Lord and his apoſtles could be ſaid to work any.

They ſay farther, that Peter and Paul, in the caſes referred to, neither threatened nor inflicted any thing. What did they do then? Why they only foretold ſuch and ſuch things; but the inflictions were the immediate act of God, for which they were not reſponſible. I anſwer, If God intruſted his power with them

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for a ſeaſon (and that he did ſo your correſpondents allow) ſurely they were reſponſible for an abuſe, or indiſcreet exertion of it. And what can be conceived more ſo, than that of puniſhing religious miſbehaviour, as the magiſtrate does civil and capital crimes, with the loſs of limbs, liberty, or life? Was not ſuch exertion of power (for to ſay power was conferred, which they could not exert, is both ludicrous and contradictory) unſuitable to the genius of the chriſtian religion? Was it not confounding two things that ſhould always be kept diſtinct and ſeparate, the *kingdom of Chriſt*, and the kingdoms of this world? I aſk, Did either the commiſſion they had received, or the religion they profeſſed, authorize temporal puniſhments? I think not.

Vigilius ſeems not diſpoſed to admit the ſuppoſition, that *God would intruſt his power, or the diſcretionary exertion of it with any man, however holy and good.* What will he ſay then to the caſe, as exemplified in the conduct of Moſes? That great legiſlator was certainly intruſted with a miraculous power of ſupplying the Jewiſh camp with water, which he accordingly did. He ſtruck the rock twice, and the miracle followed; and yet, in the exertion of that power, he manifeſtly exceeded his commiſſion, Numb. xx. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12; and why might not the apoſtles, we are now ſpeaking of, do the ſame? As to the ideas of *infallibility* and *miraculous power*, which Vigilius ſeems to connect, I have only this to ſay, that my notions of apoſtolic infallibility are very qualified ones, and that I

am not at all diſpoſed to ſet the ſervants on a level with their maſter.

Vigilius thinks it *unreaſonable to aſcribe the infliction on the inceſtuous perſon, whatever that was, to Paul, who was two hundred miles from the ſcene of action*; to which it is ſcarce needful to reply, that what was done by Paul's order was done by Paul; and that two miles and two hundred make no difference in the caſe. The apoſtle ſeems to wonder the church had not expelled the offender ſooner. *Ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.* They continued ſtill to treat him as a brother, and one of their ſociety, which Paul heard with indignation; but though he finds fault with them for not expelling him the ſociety, he does not impute it to them as a fault, that they had not delivered him to *Satan?* This was, perhaps, above their power, and could be done only by himſelf. He does, indeed, require the conſent of the church in thus puniſhing him (for puniſhment it is expreſsly ſtiled, 2 Cor. ii. 6.) that the equity of it might be more apparent, yet ſo as that the execution of the ſentence ſhould be conſidered as the reſult of his own order. And ſometimes he proceeded without their conſent, as in the caſe of Hymeneus and Alexander. This infliction of bodily diſorders, ſeems to have been the rod he threatened the Corinthians with —this the power he had in readineſs to revenge all diſobedience.

One remark, which I cannot help making on thoſe ingenious apologiſts for the two apoſtles is this,

this, that their endeavouring to exculpate them from the charge brought againſt them amounts to a plain acknowledgment, that *ſuch* exertions of power in *them* had been unjuſtifiable on chriſtian principles; which is evidently giving up the point in queſtion, and granting all I contend for.

Having conſidered the ſubſtance of Vigilius's anſwer, I ſhall juſt take notice of a criticiſm advanced by the other unknown writer; he thinks that *delivering to Satan* and *turning out of the ſociety* are ſynonimous, and imply no bodily infliction at all; that the *deſtruction of the fleſh* means the deſtruction of fleſhly luſts; a thought ingenious enough, if it could be cleverly made out, and well ſupported; but I am rather apprehenſive it cannot. If the fleſh, or the *old man*, is here oppoſed to the *new man*, the following words, *that the ſpirit might be ſaved in the day of the Lord*, would have no ſort of propriety in them; for the new man is never in danger of damnation: but if the body, here called *fleſh*, is oppoſed to the ſoul, the propriety is apparent enough; the apoſtle ſuppoſes that the ſouls of ſuch delinquents could not otherwiſe be ſafe than by the application of ſuch ſharp remedies. Beſides, how could the bare turning one out of their ſociety deſtroy his fleſhly appetites? With ſome modeſt and ingenuous minds it might, poſſibly, have that effect; but ſuch a procedure, in a general way, confirms bad habits, inſtead of removing them, as it tends to deſtroy the laſt ſupport of virtue, *ſhame*. Add to this, that *delivering to Satan* appears, from Paul's own words, to have been *a poſitive puniſhment*. *I*

have delivered Hymeneus and Alexander to Satan, ινα παιδευθωσι μη βλασφημειν; not barely that they might learn not to blaſpheme, but, as the words import, *that being chaſtized*, or puniſhed, *they might learn not to blaſpheme.* Now the right they had to puniſh delinquents in that manner, ſtill appears to me to be problematical. From a mere power to do a thing no one can juſtly infer the propriety of doing it. To ſet before bad chriſtians the *terrors of this world*, or to apply thoſe terrors, is not, in my opinion, the way to reclaim them, much leſs to improve their chriſtianity. Whatever tendency they may have to preſerve the tranquillity of the *ſtate*, they have none at all to make citizens of heaven.

But whether or no the apoſtles exceeded their commiſſion in thoſe acts of ſeverity, will beſt appear by looking into the commiſſion itſelf, as recorded by three evangeliſts; *Heal the ſick, cleanſe the lepers, raiſe the dead, and caſt out devils,* ſays Matthew. *Then called he his twelve diſciples together, and gave them power over all devils, and to cure diſeaſes. And he ſent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the ſick.* After his reſurrection, and before he was parted from them, his commiſſion to them was, *Go teach all nations to obſerve whatſoever I have commanded you. And theſe ſigns ſhall follow them that believe: in my name ſhall they caſt out devils; they ſhall ſpeak with new tongues; they ſhall take up ſerpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it ſhall not hurt them; they ſhall lay hands on the ſick, and they ſhall recover.* In this commiſſion we do not find any authority given them to inflict temporal puniſhments,

ments, either upon unbelievers, or profeſſed chriſtians. The nature of the kingdom, which Chriſt came to erect, and ſent *them* to extend, did not admit of ſuch a procedure; and himſelf never ſet an example of it.

I muſt conclude with aſſuring your learned correſpondents, that if their anſwers have not entirely removed my ſcruples, as to the matter in debate, it is not owing to any ſatisfaction I have, or ever can have, in being a

PYRRHO.

Some Thoughts concerning the Perſon of CHRIST, *in Defence of Dr.* LARDNER's *Letter on that Subject.*

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

THough the late Dr. Lardner's letter on the Logos * was publiſhed in the beginning

* This piece, though printed without the Doctor's name, was very generally attributed to him, and is now publicly acknowledged as his, in *The Memoirs of his Life and Writings*, lately publiſhed, p. 112. It is plainly aſſerted, in the Preface, to have been (as to the ſubſtance of it) a *real letter*, written almoſt thirty years before, under the fictitious name of *Philalethes*, to his friend *Papinian*, a man of great eminence, and a diligent reader of the ſcriptures, who at the time of its publication had been long dead. *Papinian*'s Anſwer to it, I am well aſſured, is ſtill in being, and of ſome conſiderable length. Many, no doubt, would be deſirous to ſee it in print; and ſo much of it, at leaſt, as relates to the Logos, or Perſon of Chriſt, would probably be eſteemed no unacceptable article for your Repoſitory.

of the year 1759, and has certainly been read with attention by many, yet I remember not to have met with any printed remarks upon it, beſides thoſe with which you favoured the public, in the laſt number of your valuable Repoſitory.

What idea we form of the nature and perſon of Jeſus the ſon of God, and ſaviour of the world, can ſcarcely be thought a matter of indifference by any real chriſtian: yet on this head, as well as on many other articles of revealed religion, there has been a ſtrange diverſity and contrariety of ſentiments. The opinion adopted by the worthy letter-writer comes peculiarly recommended by its plainneſs and ſimplicity; and tho' oppoſite to that which has been favoured by ſeveral of the moſt admired writers of the preſent century, is ſupported, I think, by arguments not unworthy of their notice, and with a calmneſs and candour deſerving univerſal imitation.

I pretend not, indeed, that thoſe arguments are always irrefragably concluſive, or that all difficulties and objections are ſatisfactorily anſwered, or obviated: but have long wiſhed to ſee the ſubject farther diſcuſſed, between perſons of different ſentiments, in a way of free and friendly debate; which is the moſt likely way to throw light upon what is obſcure, and to clear up what is involved in perplexity and confuſion. As to the objections advanced by the ingenious remarker, I muſt confeſs they appear not to me, by any means ſufficient to deſtroy the force of Dr. Lardner's reaſonings. The following conſiderations and reflections that were occaſioned thereby, if you think them not too ſlight

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for public notice, will, I hope, be offenſive to none. They are offered not without diffidence and doubts; but with an earneſt deſire of better information wherever I may be miſtaken.

The opinion which the letter-writer oppoſes, ſeems to me clearly enough ſpecified in the title page and preface, viz. That the Logos, a glorious and exalted ſpirit, next in dignity to the Supreme, took upon him a human body only, himſelf ſupplying the place of a human ſoul, in the perſon of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And I ſuppoſe there are few, if any, of thoſe denominated Arians, who attribute to him both a human ſoul, and a ſuper-angelic ſpirit. This, at leaſt, our remarker does not. But he maintains (and thinks there are numbers who agree with him) "That the Logos, or pre-exiſtent "ſpirit of Chriſt, when he aſſumed fleſh, was "actually degraded to the rank of a human ſoul" —or, "converted into a human ſoul"——or, "That this pre-exiſtent ſoul was changed into "that of a man, before it animated a human "body," as it is afterwards expreſſed. And the defenders of this ſcheme he diſtinguiſhes by the appellation of Modern Arians.

Now whether this ſcheme has indeed been maintained by numbers, or by any one beſide the author of theſe remarks, I ſhall not take upon me to determine; but may truly ſay, that no writer within the compaſs of my reading and memory, has been equally explicit with him on this head. It is true, a great degradation is admitted by many; and muſt needs be ſuppoſed, in order to account for the ſcriptural repreſenta-

tions of the human infirmities to which our Lord was ſubject, and of the divine aids and influences communicated to him during his abode here on earth. But the particular nature and degree, time and circumſtances of this degradation, have ſeldom been inquired into. And, notwithſtanding the great acknowledged difficulty of conceiving how a ſpirit that was employed in creating all things, and whoſe knowledge and power muſt, accordingly, extend to the whole, and to every the minuteſt part of univerſal nature, ſhould have its faculties and capacities ſo cramped and confined, by a mere union to a material ſyſtem; yet I know of no one, before this writer, who has ſuggeſted the leaſt hint of ſuch an humiliating change as he ſpeaks of, taking place before the Word became fleſh. Nor ſhould I have expected that any Arian would ſay, as he tells us the Modern Arians do, "That our Lord Chriſt was, during "his incarnation, only *a mere man*, conſiſting "of ſoul and body."

It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that by the ſuppoſition of this previous change, he himſelf, at leaſt, gets tolerably clear of the three firſt arguments of which he takes notice, as advanced by the letter-writer againſt the pre-exiſtent ſcheme. But the ſuppoſition itſelf is, I think, at beſt deſtitute of all ſupport from reaſon, or ſcripture; and appears to have no other recommendation, than the uſe he makes of it to free a favourite ſcheme from difficulties that would, in his own eſtimation, be otherwiſe unſurmountable. And, without pretending to determine what is

poſſible

poſſible or *impoſſible*, with reſpect to the change of one ſpecies of ſpiritual beings into another, it muſt ſurely appear *improbable*, to a high degree, that a moſt excellent and approved ſpirit, poſſeſſed of powers ſufficient for the formation and conſervation of the univerſe, and actually employed therein, ſhould be reduced to the rank of a mere human ſoul, and ſo capable of nothing more than another ſoul might be, at whatever time this degradation be ſuppoſed to take place. So very unlikely an event muſt needs require an evidence proportionably clear and unqueſtionable, to render it credible.

Under the fourth article the remarker makes very light of the learned doctor's explication of that celebrated text, Phil ii. 6, 7. on which he and others ſeem principally to ground their notion of the amazing debaſement of Chriſt's preexiſtent ſpirit. But in the reaſon ſuggeſted for his not ſo much as attempting the refutation of that comment, he ſeems to have quite forgotten the date of the letter on which he is animadverting. For certainly the author's genius was very far from being in its laſt decrepitude in the year 1730, when it was written, or even in 1759, when it was printed: witneſs the far greater part of his numerous and valuable productions, ſince the former period; and the ſecond volume of his ſermons, his remarks on Profeſſor Ward's Diſſertations, and his collection of Jewiſh and Heathen teſtimonies to the truth of the chriſtian religion, ſince the latter. And, indeed, we are aſſured, by the writer of his Memoirs (p. 134.) "that he continued in the perfect uſe of all his

"faculties,

" faculties, except his hearing, till the time of " his death."

As to the comment ſo much deſpiſed, though not drawn out at full length, it contains hints that may eaſily be extended farther, and agrees in the main with that of Grotius, as appears by the Latin note, at the foot of p. 12. Other critics too, of no contemptible talents, particularly M. Le Clerc, have given a like interpretation of the paſſage; in which I ſee nothing that obliges us to underſtand the apoſtle as ſpeaking of the form or nature of Chriſt in a pre-exiſtent ſtate, and of his diveſting himſelf of that form, or changing his proper nature, either at or before his incarnation; *the poſſibility* of which, as *his own act*, may indeed, well be queſtioned: nor is the context any way favourable to ſuch a ſenſe of the words. For the exhortation which introduces them, v. 5. *Let this mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus*, cannot certainly be underſtood as requiring ſuch a condeſcenſion in us, as our Lord is ſuppoſed to have ſubmitted to in diveſting himſelf of a glorious ſuper-angelic nature, and becoming a mere man.

But, to conſider the ſeveral parts of this text more diſtinctly.——Where is the abſurdity or weakneſs of ſuppoſing, with Dr. Lardner, and others, that Chriſt's *being in the form of God*, v. 6. refers to thoſe very extraordinary communications of divine knowledge and power, which he enjoyed in this world; to thoſe unparalleled miracles which he wrought, and that abſolute command over nature which he appeared to poſſeſs; in reſpect to which he ſeemed more like a god

god than a man? Compare Exod. vii. 1. John x. 34—36. Yet he who was thus in the form of God, *did not earneſtly covet to be*, or appear, *equal*, or like, *to God* (as the next clauſe may be rendered) that is, he did not ſeek divine honours from man; he did not with this view make an oſtentatious diſplay of his god-like powers and perfections, or affect to appear in any reſpect independent of his heavenly Father; but on the contrary, profeſſed on all occaſions to ſeek his honour, to teach only what he had received from him, and to do the works which the Father had appointed and empowered him to do. (See Mark x. 17, 18. John v. 19, 30, 36. vi. 38. vii. 16, 18. ix. 3, 4. xii. 49, 50. xiv. 10.)

When it is further ſaid of our Lord (v. 7.) that *he made himſelf of no reputation*, or emptied himſelf, according to the literal import of the original phraſe, is there any thing unnatural in referring this to his voluntarily ſubmitting to live in a mean and low ſtate, inſtead of exerting his miraculous power to enrich and aggrandize himſelf in the world? (Compare Gen. xxxi. 42. Luke i. 53. Matt. viii. 20. 2 Cor. viii. 9.) This voluntary abaſement the apoſtle goes on to illuſtrate by other expreſſions in the two following clauſes, before each of which it is obſervable the copulative is wanting in the original. *But emptied himſelf, taking upon him the form of a ſervant.* (See Matt. xx. 28. Luke xxii. 27.) *being made*, or rather, *being in the likeneſs of men.* That is, appearing, in the general, as if there was nothing in him more than human, though *the fullneſs of the godhead dwelt really*

really in him. (Col. ii. 9.) It is added (v. 8.) as the laſt and greateſt conceivable inſtance of his condeſcenſion and ſubmiſſion, *and being found in faſhion,* or according to outward appearance, *as a man,* as another ordinary man, *he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs.* Which needs no comment.

Dr. Whitby, indeed, will have it, that Chriſt muſt have been in the form of God, before he took upon him the form of a ſervant. But as there is nothing in the conſtruction of the words that neceſſarily infers this concluſion, ſo we know, in fact, that even while our Lord manifeſted a power that could controul all nature, and procure him an undiſturbed poſſeſſion of worldly affluence and ſplendour, he actually declined the exertion of it to ſuch purpoſes, and freely ſubmitted to a life of poverty and contempt, and to a moſt diſgraceful and excruciating death; and there was in the whole of his appearance, character and conduct, a moſt wonderful mixture of greatneſs and condeſcenſion, of majeſty and meekneſs. (See Matt. xvi. 21, 23. xvii. 24, 27. xxvi. 53. John vi. 15. x. 17, 18. xviii. 4, 8, 10, 11. Compare Lardn. Serm. vol. ii. No. 8. on 2 Cor. viii. 9.)

CHARISTES.

[*To be concluded in the next number.*]

THE

Theological Repoſitory.

Some thoughts concerning the Perſon of CHRIST, *in Defence of Dr.* LARDNER's *Letter on that Subject, concluded from p.* 76.

THE Remarker, in the fifth article, takes notice of the learned writer's interpretation of John xvii. 5. who with Grotius and Auguſtin, underſtands *the glory which Chriſt had, before the world was, with the Father*, of that glory which was always deſigned for him, in God's immutable purpoſe, according to an uſual way of ſpeaking among the Jews. Now here it is admitted, "There may be ſome, though not "many paſſages where the ſame, or reſembling "expreſſions are taken in this ſenſe." (Compare v. 24. Eph. i. 3, 4. 2 Tim. i. 9. 1 Pet. i. 20. Rev. xiii. 8.) But then, taking it for granted, inſtead of proving, that the exiſtence of Chriſt before his incarnation is aſſerted Phil. ii. 6. and elſewhere, we are aſked, "is not this the moſt "obvious and natural reference of the text? "(John xvii. 5.) Why then have recourſe to "a Jewiſh idiom for another?" And it is hinted

hinted that there are other texts, favouring our Lord's pre-exiſtence, that cannot be thus ſet aſide. What particular texts may be intended, I cannot take upon me to ſay, as none are cited: But with regard to that noted text, John viii. 58. *Before Abraham was, I am*, with which many ſeem to have been greatly embarraſſed; I know not of any more ſatisfactory ſolution than that which Grotius draws from this quarter, viz. that Jeſus was before Abraham in the divine conſtitution or appointment; ſuppoſing a reference here intended to that moſt early prediction concerning him, Gen. iii. 15. as perhaps there may be, v. 56. to Gen. xvii. 17. As to thoſe texts wherein Chriſt is ſaid to come, or to be ſent from God, into the world, and the like; they ſeem very well accounted for, by obſerving that the like expreſſions are uſed concerning John Baptiſt, and our Lord's diſciples, John i. 6. xvii. 18. xx. 21. And for the ſenſe of John i. 15, 30. ſee Lardn. Lett. p. 13, 14. See alſo an Illuſtration on John iii. 13. Theol. Repoſ. vol. i. p. 353.

In the next remark, mention is made of the worthy author's obſervations on the introduction to St. John's goſpel; and the juſtneſs of his interpretation ſeems to be admitted. A conceſſion the more remarkable, as Dr. Lardner himſelf acknowledges the difficulty of that paſſage, and has left ſome parts of it untouched, expreſſing his wiſhes for further light. His Commentary, however, ſo far as it goes is, I think, very valuable, and much more eaſy and natural than either thoſe of the Fratres Poloni,

or

or that of Dr. Dawſon, in his third diſcourſe at Lady Moyer's Lectures. And if we conſider the Logos, the wiſdom, power, or ſpirit of God, as here perſonalized (in like manner as divine wiſdom is, Prov. viii. to which there ſeems an evident alluſion) inſtead of denoting another real perſon or intelligent agent, this thought will perhaps ſerve as a clue to lead us ſafely through all the intricacies of the ſeeming labyrinth.*

The Doctor's large collection of texts relating to the ſonſhip of Chriſt, admitting the induction to be complete, is repreſented as inſufficient to afford any argument againſt the Arian ſcheme. But ſince ſome have urged that Jeſus was the ſon of God moſt eminently, on account of the ſuppoſed derivation of his glorious pre-exiſtent ſpirit immediately from the Father, a conſiderable point is gained if it be thus made to appear, that he is never *ſo called* on that account; and a ſtrong preſumption, at leaſt, would hence ariſe againſt the hypotheſis itſelf, ſince, if allowed to be well founded, it would be indeed the higheſt and juſteſt ground imaginable for the appellation.

The ſeventh article only refers to other parts of the remarks; but the eighth contains ſeveral particulars that require ſome diſtinct notice. Dr. Lardner had complained (p. 2, 3.) of the extreme difficulty of conceiving how our bleſſed

* See Lardner's Supplement, V. i. p. 438. 42. ſecond edition. And the True Doctrine of the New Teſtament concerning Jeſus Chriſt, Appendix.

Lord

Lord ſhould gain any exaltation or reward, by receiving, after his reſurrection and aſcenſion, a reſplendent human body, and being made the king of good men, the judge of the world, and the Lord of angels, if he was the firſt and only immediately derived being, by whom God made the world, and ſo vaſtly ſuperior both to men and angels before. To this the remarker anſwers, "that admitting our Lord was raiſed to "no higher dignity, yet he poſſeſſed it afterwards as the reward of his ſervices, whereas be"fore it was only, or chiefly, the conſequence of "his rank in the ſcale of beings." But this, inſtead of ſolving the difficulty, is the very difficulty itſelf; viz. How a bare reſtoration to prior dignity and glory could be propoſed, or can be conſidered as the reward of a voluntary ſubmiſſion to a ſtate of great abaſement, and for all the ſervices performed, and ſufferings endured in ſuch a ſtate.

The remarker adds, that "Chriſt, upon the "Arian ſcheme, is but the firſt creature, the firſt "ſubject; and it was fit that he ſhould ſubmit "to ſuch an extraordinary and voluntary abaſe"ment of himſelf to carry on the great ſcheme of "Providence, and ſet an example of obedience to "his brethren and fellow ſubjects." As to which it may be ſufficient to obſerve, that the ſcriptures give us no intimation of any particular deſigns of providence which ſuch an amazing debaſement of ſo excellent a being was requiſite to anſwer. The reproaches, contradictions, and ſufferings to which our Lord here ſubmitted with a moſt exemplary meekneſs and patience, the

virtues

virtues of his life, and his becoming obedient unto death, are often propoſed to our imitation. But we have no ſuch frequent repreſentations, no ſuch clear and emphatical deſcriptions of his humiliation in taking our nature upon him, as might have been expected upon the Arian hypotheſis. (See Lardner's Letter, p. 21.)

The ſentiments expreſſed in the former part of the next paragraph, are ſtrong indications of a good and elevated mind. It muſt doubtleſs be a high gratification to a truly benevolent being, to be made the inſtrument of raiſing a race of depraved mortals to ſuch degrees of wiſdom and holineſs, of dignity and bliſs, as the goſpel encourages us to hope for, eſpecially after our entrance on an immortal ſtate. And this muſt needs conſtitute a principal part of that joy, which was ſet before the redeemer of mankind, with a view to which he endured all the agonies of the croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame of ſo ignominious an execution, with a moſt animating magnanimity. But as, according to the remarker's own ſcheme, the redemption of the world is effected by a being who, in his degraded ſtate, was every way like one of us (ſin only excepted) but is now exalted to his original glory, and made head over all things for the benefit of his church; ſo it does not appear from any thing here ſuggeſted, of what uſe the powers of which he diveſted himſelf were, in the œconomy of our redemption. Nor does the ſcripture any where repreſent our Lord, as laying aſide the glories of a pre-exiſtent ſtate, either with a view of being reſtored to them again, or of gaining

any additional authority or happineſs; but ſpeaks of the dignity to which he is advanced, and of the power with which he is inveſted, as the reward of his eminent virtues, of the labours of his life, and of his voluntary ſubmiſſion to ſufferings and death, according to the will of God, in our behalf. (See Matt. xxviii. 18. Luke xxiv. 26. John xvii. 4, 5. Acts ii. 36. v. 30, 31. Rom. xiv. 9. Phil. ii. 8, 11. Heb. ii. 9, 10. xii. 2. 1 Peter i. 11. iii. 18, 22.)

The remarker goes on to ſay, that "on the "modern Arian ſcheme he can give a very juſt "account, both of our Lord's humiliation and "exaltation, agreeable both to reaſon and ſcripture; but on the Socinian (as he calls that of "the letter-writer) he can give no juſt account "of either."—"For of what honour or advan"tage (it is aſked) was he poſſeſſed, or could "he, on this ſcheme, relinquiſh, when he took "upon him our nature?"—None is pretended. —"Or of what was he afterwards deprived du"ring the courſe of his life?"—Of none, otherwiſe than by his own free conſent. But the inſtances of his voluntary abaſement and ſelf-denial, as well living as dying (according to the explication before given of Phil. ii. 7, 8.) were ſurely neither few nor inconſiderable.

Again, as the exaltation of our bleſſed Lord is admitted on both ſchemes, the remarker aſks, "If the human ſoul could be thus exalted, "and its powers ſo enlarged, why might not "the pre-exiſtent ſuper-angelic ſoul of Chriſt "be, in as extraordinary a manner, degraded "and depreſſed; the one being as inconceivable

"as

"as the other?" I anſwer; there is no reaſon to doubt but that the author of all being and perfection can depreſs, as well as exalt, whom he pleaſes, and to whatever degree he ſees fit. But, beſides that the Arians, in ſuppoſing the ſoul of Chriſt to have been originally the moſt exalted ſpirit in the univerſe, next to the one ſupreme, and to have been employed by him in creating all things viſible and inviſible, make his degradation greater than the ſcripture any where repreſents his preſent exaltation to be; the main difficulty lies inconceiving how ſuch an aſtoniſhing and undeſerved degradation ſhould be neceſſary, or what valuable end could be anſwered by it: whereas both the uſe and propriety of raiſing that excellent perſon to be a prince, who was appointed to be our ſaviour, and who was worthy of the high honours that are conferred upon him, are frequently pointed out in ſcripture, and obvious to our underſtanding.

But it is repreſented as a thing "void of "all propriety and fitneſs, and a reverſal of "the order eſtabliſhed by the great Creator" (according to which creatures are advancing, by a gradual approach, to greater perfection, and higher ſtations) "that he who was never any "other than a mere man, ſhould be thus exal-"ted above angels, principalities and powers." But when we conſider how very extraordinary a perſonage the man Chriſt Jeſus was, with reſpect to his divine original, qualifications, and communications (for a *mere man*, I think, we are not warranted to eſteem him) when we think of

the important commiſſion he received from the Father, and of the fidelity and zeal with which he executed it, amidſt the moſt diſcouraging difficulties and oppoſitions of every kind; we need not greatly wonder at what the ſcripture tells us, of the dignity and authority to which he is advanced, not only as the reward of his meritorious obedience and ſufferings, but as the neceſſary means of completing the work of our redemption and ſalvation, which is only begun on earth. As to the ſeveral orders of angelic beings, we know but little of their peculiar nature, or of their different ranks and ſtations in the univerſe; only this, that they are all miniſtering ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter to thoſe of the human race (though made a little lower than they) who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation. And what appearance of impropriety is there, in placing him who had probably done, and certainly ſuffered far more than any of them all, in our behalf, at the head of thoſe active and benevolent beings, who had been all along employed, as the inſtruments of Providence, in the adminiſtration of human affairs?

As to the 9th and laſt remark, relating to the encouragement given us by the goſpel, to expect a glory like that conferred on our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; it is allowed that this likeneſs muſt, upon any ſcheme, fall ſhort of an equality. Yet the expreſſions in ſome of the texts quoted by the doctor (p. 43.) are remarkably ſtrong. And indeed the privileges and bleſſings which chriſtians derive from the mediation of Chriſt, are often deſcribed in the ſame alluſions and figurative

figurative expreſſions, that are made uſe of to repreſent the dignities to which he himſelf is raiſed: As *ſons* and *heirs of God*, and *joint heirs of Chriſt*; *kings* and *prieſts to God*; *having a kingdom appointed to them*; *being partakers of a divine nature*, and *one with Chriſt, even as he is one with the Father*; *ſitting with him on his throne*, and *judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael*, and *even the angels*; in ſhort, as partaking with him in his reſurrection, exaltation, dominion, glory, and joy. (See Bourn's ſermons, vol. 2. p. 143, 4.) And yet, as Dr. Lardner intimates, the glory of Chriſt as employed by God in creating all things, is what we can have no thought of coming near.

The remarker, towards the cloſe of his letter, amidſt ſeveral ſtrong profeſſions of his good opinion of thoſe from whom he differs, of his freedom from all party rancour, and of his particular eſteem and veneration for the author of the piece on which he had been animadverting, ſays, —"and yet, to ſpeak freely, I have not the "leaſt idea how the doctor's notion can ſtand "upon any other foot than that of a mitigated "kind of deiſm, which ſuppoſes that the firſt "chriſtians wrote under no divine direction at "all, and that they made no difficulty of ſacri-"ficing truth to utility." A reflection expreſſed in ſtill harſher terms in the following period, which I ſhall not tranſcribe.—But as neither this worthy author, nor Grotius (from whom he has borrowed many of his illuſtrations) nor even any of the firſt and moſt reputable Socinians, whoſe interpretations of ſome texts ſeem to be much leſs eaſy and natural, have taken this very unjuſ-

tifiable method of reconciling their ſentiments concerning the perſon of Chriſt, with their profeſſion of chriſtianity; ſo had the remarker, on the one hand, fairly conſidered the force of what they urge in favour of their peculiar interpretations, and, on the other, how difficult it is to maintain almoſt any controverted point of theology, without being obliged to depart from the literal and moſt obvious ſenſe of ſome paſſages of ſcripture, and to have recourſe to Jewiſh idioms, and meanings highly figurative and alluſive, with which the ſacred writers do undeniably abound; I ſhould think he would ſcarcely have been ſo ready to charge the opinion under conſideration with ſuch odious and deteſtable conſequences.

Such are the thoughts that occurred to me in going over the ſeveral remarks on Dr. Lardner's letter, for the freedom of which I hope no apology is neceſſary. As to the ſcheme ſuggeſted in the poſtſcript, as a kind of medium between thoſe of Dr. Clarke and Dr. Lardner, and recommended as greatly preferable to the latter, if the former ſhould be thought indefenſible; it has given occaſion to a farther ſet of conſiderations, which may follow hereafter, but would ſwell the preſent article to too great a length. With hearty wiſhes for the growing reputation and ſucceſs of your uſeful undertaking,

I am, Gentlemen,

Your very humble ſervant,

CHARISTES.

To

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

THE following criticiſm on a paſſage of ſcripture not hitherto very ſatisfactorily explained throughout, by any of the commentators, having been lately received from a learned and worthy friend, and eſteemed not only new and ingenious, but remarkably congruous to the apparent deſign of the apoſtle, is recommended as deſerving a place in your Repoſitory, and the conſideration of the lovers of ſacred literature, by

AN OCCASIONAL CONTRIBUTOR.

THE apoſtle Paul, in the third chapter of his epiſtle to the Philippians, in oppoſition to the Judaizing teachers, recounts his own diſtinguiſhing privileges as a Jew, and ſhews that they were ſo far from being neceſſary to ſalvation, that he counted them quite uſeleſs.

V. 7—21. But what things were gain to me, thoſe I counted loſs for Chriſt. Yea, doubtleſs, I count all *theſe* things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord; for whoſe ſake I ſuffer the loſs of all, and do count them but dung, that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him; not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made

conformable unto his death. *Or formed* (by theſe ſufferings) *to the model of his death.* If by any means I might attain to the removal or expulſion* of thoſe things which are dead, *the hand-writing of ordinances, which were nailed to the croſs of Chriſt.* Col. ii. 14. Compare Rom. vii. 4—6.

Not that I have already obtained this, or am already perfect, *have already gained the point aimed at*; but I follow after, *am in purſuit of it*, that I may apprehend, *lay hold upon*, that for which I was apprehended of Jeſus Chriſt. Brethren, I count not myſelf to have apprehended, *to have completed the deſign of my miraculous converſion*; but this one thing I do, *this is the ſingle point in view*, forgetful of the things which are behind (vide Rom. xv. 18, &c.) reaching forth to thoſe which are before, I preſs towards the mark—*I proſecute this point agreeably to the original intention of my divine commiſſion*, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus. (Com. 2 Tim. iv. 6—8.)

Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: And if in any thing ye be otherwiſe minded, God ſhall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheleſs whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the ſame rule, let us mind the ſame thing—*Having got the ſtart of others in being inſtructed in the truth, let us adhere to the pure doctrines of the goſpel, and preſerve unanimity in affection.* Gal. vi. 16.

Brethren, be ye, as others are, followers of

* V. 11. Εξανασασις ab εξανασημι exurgo, loco me moveo. Polyb. l. 1. εξανασασις expulſio e ſede. Scap. Lex.

me,

me, and mark them that walk ſo, as ye have us for an example. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the croſs of Chriſt, whoſe end—*or ſcope, to which their views are directed*, is deſtruction—*their city, temple, ſacrifices, rituals, &c.* will be deſtroyed utterly; whoſe God is their belly—*in their worſhip they mainly reſpect meats and drinks, and things ſenſual*; their glory is in ſhame—*a worldly ſanctuary, the law of a carnal commandment, a yoke of bondage, conſiſting of weak and beggarly elements, is their boaſt*; who mind earthly things—*they have their thoughts ſet upon a temporal Chriſt and kingdom*; but our converſation is in heaven—*we belong to the community (not of the earthly Jeruſalem and temple, but) of heaven*; from whence we look for the ſaviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall change the figure of the body of our humiliation, that it may be faſhioned like unto the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to ſubdue all things unto himſelf. Comp. Col. ii. 20.—iii. 4.

Brief remarks concerning the two creations, mentioned in the ſacred writings; the one, real and proper, always aſcribed to the one only living and true God alone; the other, a moral or ſpiritual creation, the author of which is our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

IN the holy ſcriptures, as in all other writings, we are apt to be much miſled by the ſame words

words and phraſes being differently uſed in different places. One would expect indeed, that greater care ſhould be taken, not to be deceived, in religious ſubjects, as of the higheſt importance. And yet, which is as true as hard to be believed at firſt ſight, on theſe ſubjects men take leaſt care, and are more willingly deceived than on any others. Early prejudice, lazineſs, a worldly mind, worldly intereſt, and a cowardly ſuperſtitious awe, and fear of enquiring and examining for ourſelves, too often conſpire to keep us from going beyond what our nurſe or the prieſt have taught us.

Nothing advanced here, though I am very far from pretending to the merit of a firſt diſcovery, will, I fear, have any effect upon thoſe, who are tritheiſts, or orthodox in the vulgar and ſtrict ſenſe; who can with the ſame breath, and in the ſame ſentence, without being aſtoniſhed at themſelves, aſſert, that there are three creators, and yet but one creator. There is no arguing with men that can ſwallow, without feeling, downright contradictions; who have reſigned up their underſtandings to the jargon of a falſe philoſophy, firſt imported into chriſtianity, from Plato ill underſtood, by the early fathers of the church, and improved and minted afterwards into a current ſyſtem in the dark ages that followed until the ſixteenth century.

What I have to offer, I wiſh to be conſidered by thoſe, who, believing the proper unity of God, are, as it ſeems to me, undeſignedly led into diſparaging conceptions, of this firſt great cauſe and Father of all, and ſuch as inſenſibly diminiſh

diminiſh that religious regard and worſhip which are due to him alone, by aſſigning him an aſſociate or delegate in the creation of the univerſe. Such a paſſive unactive God, with reverence be it ſpoken, has ſo much the air of an indolent Epicurean deity, that I could never be reconciled to it. Surely the God that made the world, is the God that we are to worſhip: there is, there can be no other.

The holy ſcriptures throughout declare, that God, the ſelf-exiſtent, eternal, is alone the maker of all things. Amongſt many other places—ſee Gen i. 1—31. Exod. xx. 11. John i. 1, 2, &c. Acts xvii. 24. iv. 24, 25, 26, 27. From which laſt paſſage, Pearſon on the Creed, p. 65, ed. 5. draws a concluſion in theſe words—"Jeſus "then, was the child of that God, that made "the heaven and the earth, and conſequently, "the father of Chriſt is the Creator of the "world."

It muſt be confeſſed, that the beginning of St. John's goſpel has been commonly looked upon as a direct proof that the natural world, and all things in it, were made by Chriſt, and that he is the Word, or Logos, there ſpoken of. But this interpretation has been demonſtrated to be wholly without foundation, by many learned men, and principally by the late venerable Dr. Lardner, in the firſt vol. of the Supplement to his Credibility of the Goſpel Hiſtory, and in another work of his, *i. e.* "A letter written firſt in the year 1730," &c. publiſhed in 1759, ſo that it will hardly now meet with any more patrons. To him I refer; but ſhall beg leave

leave to tranſcribe a few lines out the former work, pag. 437, 438.

"What St. John ſays in the introduction, appears to me agreeable to the main deſign of his goſpel. He therein ſhews, that Jeſus came, and acted by the authority of God, the creator of the world, the God, and ſupreme law-giver of the Jewiſh people. The eternal Word [Logos] reaſon, wiſdom, power of God, which is God himſelf, by which the world had been made, by which he dwelled among the Jews in the tabernacle and the temple, dwelled, and reſided in Jeſus, in the fulleſt manner: So that his diſciples, and others who believed in him, ſaw, and clearly diſcerned him to be the promiſed Meſſiah, the great prophet, that ſhould come into the world."

Their is another portion of ſcripture, which, like this in the beginning of St. John's goſpel, has been alledged to prove Chriſt the creator of the world, but which alſo, like that, is applicable to God alone. It is Hebrews i. 10, 11. and is a citation from Pſalm cii. 25, 26. where the words are evidently ſpoken of God alone, as they are indeed by St. Paul, in his application of them. Let us go back to ver. 8. where we read; "But unto the ſon [or concerning the ſon] he ſaith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Or, as it ought rather to be rendered, more agreeably to the Hebrew original and the Septuagint—"God is thy throne for ever and ever"—*i. e.* God is thy ſupport, thy ſeat, the eſtabliſher of thy throne and power.

And

And then, in confirmation of this that is here ſaid, it immediately follows, in the paſſage in diſpute, "And thou, Lord, in the beginning "haſt laid the foundation of the earth; and the "heavens are the works of thine hands. They "ſhall periſh; but thou remaineſt: And they "all ſhall wax old," &c. All this very ſuitable to the argument, to denote the perpetuity of that kingdom and authority which God, the creator and diſpoſer of all things, had beſtowed upon Chriſt; that although all other things created were ſubject to decay and diſſolution, his kingdom ſhould be unchangeable and everlaſting.

I have one obſervation here to make, which ſeems to be unqueſtionably ſound and true, and if allowed, as I believe it will, by all parties, it will, for the future, for ever prevent any incidental parts or ſentences of this epiſtle to the Hebrews being made uſe of to eſtabliſh the deity, or creatorſhip of Chriſt; and it is this:

The manifeſt deſign of the writer of this epiſtle in the beginning of it, is to prove to the Hebrews his countrymen, the preference or ſuperiority of Chriſt to angels. But certainly, if Chriſt had been the creator of angels, which the orthodox aſſert, and from which even ſuch learned Arians as Clarke, Peirce, Sykes, &c. do not diſſent, the writer would never have made ſuch a circuit in proving his point, but would have aſſerted this one plain fact in plain words, as deciſive, and have reſted his cauſe upon it, as well he might. This would have ended the controverſy at once. But neither the writer

writer of this epiſtle, nor any of the apoſtles, or ſacred writers, ſeem ever to have entertained a thought that the Creator of the world was any other but Jehovah, the one only God, the God of their anceſtors.

We are brought now to the two capital paſſages, in St. Paul's writings, Col. i. 16. Eph. iii. 9. which is ſuppoſed by many to teach directly that Chriſt is the creator of all things; but which will be found more truly to declare him only *conditorem novæ gentis*, king of the new kingdom given to him, the author of a moral and ſpiritual creation, and renovation of all things, which by his inſtrumentality was brought about.

The learned well know, that the Hebrew ברא, to create, the Greek ποιεω, κλιζω, and the Latin words *condo*, *creo*, are frequently uſed to denote, not a proper, but a moral creation, a reformation of things, an introduction of a new and better ſtate of being. In conſonance with this ſtile of language, we find the goſpel ſtate of things, which was to take place under Chriſt, deſcribed in the phraſe of a new creation; Iſaiah lxv. 17. Matt. xix. 28. 2 Pet. iii. 13.

And this is what, after others, I would briefly point out to be the intent of theſe two controverted texts. In the entrance of the epiſtle to the Coloſſians, after having endeavoured to inſpire them with a ſenſe of their great advantages by the goſpel, and exhorted to thankfulneſs to Almighty God for them, St. Paul takes occaſion to launch out into what was his main ſubject, the glorious and exalted character of the Lord

Lord Jeſus. "In whom, ſaith he, v. 14. we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveneſs of our ſins.

He here ſpeaks of him as a man ſlain, lately ſlain, as it was well known, for his teſtimony to the truth, and obedience to God. For which God had rewarded him by raiſing him from the dead, and inveſted him with a power of forgiving or cancelling the ſins of penitent believers, and in due time of redeeming them from death, and bringing them to everlaſting life.

V. 15. *Who is the image of the inviſible God*—] Adam was made, and all men are made in the image of God. But Jeſus the Lord was the moſt perfect image and reſemblance of God, moſt holy, infinitely perfect; in his perſon, and actions, exhibiting and realizing before the eyes of men, the wiſdom, power and goodneſs, which are in God, and which were imparted to him.

V. 15.——— *the firſt-born of every creature.*] He goes on to extol the Lord Jeſus. He was the moſt glorious of all the creatures, of all the works of God;—the firſt born—how firſt born: He was but lately born in Judea. I chuſe to anſwer this in Dr. Hammond's note upon the word *firſt-born.*

"The word πρωτοτοκος, beſide the ordinary notion of firſt-born, (which cannot ſo well here refer to Chriſt's eternal generation, becauſe of that which is added to it, *the firſt-born of every creature*, which only gives him a precedence before all other creatures, and doth not attribute eternity to him) is uſed ſometimes for *a lord*, or perſon in power, who hath the privilege of the firſt-born, dominion over

over all his brethren: And according to this notion it is uſed (κοινως) commonly in ſcripture for *a prince*, or *principal perſon*. So Pſalm lxviii. 27. David is called the firſt-born of the kings of the earth, that is, the moſt glorious among them, and Job xviii. 13. we have the *firſt-born of death*. And ſo among the Civilians, *hæres*, *heir*, ſignifies *dominus*, Lord. And thus may it fitly be a title of Chriſt incarnate, in reſpect of his power over his church, the key of the houſe of David laid upon him. But it is poſſible it may peculiarly refer to his reſurrection, in which he was the *firſt-born* from the dead, v. 18. the firſt, which from the grave was raiſed and exalted to heaven, and being ſo riſen, all *power* was *given* unto him in heaven and in earth."

According then to this good and learned man, the phraſe *firſt-born of every creature*, beſpeaks our Lord's precedence before all other creatures. As to *eternal generation*, if any one can underſtand it, or finds it revealed in the holy ſcriptures, he will do well to believe it.

V. 16. *For by him were all things created, that are are in heaven, and that are in earth, viſible and inviſible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him*] This cannot refer to any previous ſtate of exiſtence, or to our Saviour Chriſt's being employed as coadjutor, aſſiſtant, or miniſter of God in creating the univerſe of beings; becauſe, Eph. i. 20, 21. which is a twin-epiſtle with this, written much about the ſame time, and upon the ſame argument, and by the ſame apoſtle Paul, he informs us, that

" when

" when God raiſed Chriſt from the dead, he ſet " him at his own right hand in the heavenly " places, far above all principality, and power, " and might, and dominion," &c. Now this moſt plainly ſhews, that Chriſt was not before exalted, above theſe heavenly and angelic powers, and therefore was not their creator, and St. Paul by no means intended to deſcribe him as ſuch. It may be of ſome weight farther to add, that the natural creation cannot be what is here intended, becauſe this is uniformly and invariably ſpoken of throughout the bible, as effected by the immediate power of God, without the interpoſition of any other being whatſoever, to whom he deputed the office, and gave the power.

It follows then, in agreement with the language of the ſcriptures in other places, that we are not here to underſtand our apoſtle as attributing a proper creation to the Lord Jeſus, but a power of renewing and reforming things already made, and putting them into a new ſtate and condition. And accordingly the paſſage before us is thus interpreted by *Athanaſius* himſelf, and by many ancients and moderns, whoſe orthodoxy is as little to be ſuſpected; that the apoſtle ſpeaks not of the creation of the heavens, the earth, and the ſeas; but of that mighty change brought about by and under the Lord Jeſus, equivalent, as it were, to a new creation, by the preaching of the goſpel, and the exerciſe of the power beſtowed upon him; by which the whole face of this world and manners of men have been changed and framed anew; the Jewiſh ſtate, and religion aboliſhed, idol-worſhip de-

ſtroyed; and in the unſeen world, the angels or ſervants of God, of whatever rank or order, ranged under the Lord Jeſus as their head, from henceforth to receive their directions from him for the ſervice of the people and church of God over the whole earth, which before they received immediately from God himſelf. 1 Pet. iii. 22. Revelation i. 1. v. 6.

V. 17. *And he is before all things, and by him all things conſiſt, i. e.* he excels all others, as in inward worth and excellency, ſo in ſuperadded power and dignity, being by Almighty God ſet over, not only mankind, but all the higheſt orders of angels; and by his wiſe and powerful providence and government, his people and church are preſerved and ſupported. The interpretation here given is farther ſtrengthened and confirmed by the two following verſes, 18, 19. as will be very obvious to every one.

The other principal text, on the ground of which creating power is attributed to Chriſt, is, Epheſians iii. 9. which I ſhall tranſcribe, together with the preceding verſe.

Unto me, who am leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints, is this grace given, that I ſhould preach, among the Gentiles, the unſearchable riches of Chriſt: And to make all men ſee, what is the fellowſhip of the myſtery, which, from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt.

Mr. Locke's note here is ſo full to my ſubject, and contains ſo many valuable hints in confirmation of it, that being able to offer nothing in

in any degree equal to it, I ſhall take the whole, and finiſh with it.

"It is to be obſerved, that St. Paul often chuſes to ſpeak of the work of redemption by Chriſt as a creation. Whether it were becauſe this was the chief end of the creation, or whether it were becauſe there was no leſs ſeen of the wiſdom, power, and goodneſs of God, in this, than in the firſt creation, and the change of loſt and revolted man from being dead in ſins, to newneſs of life, was as great, and by as great a power, as at firſt making out of nothing; or whether it was becauſe the ανακεφαλαιωσις, under Jeſus Chriſt, the head mentioned chap. i. 10. was a reſtitution of the creation to its primitive ſtate and order, which, Acts iii. 21. is called αποκαταστασεως παντων, the reſtitution of all things, which was begun with the preaching of St. John Baptiſt, [who was the *Elias that reſtored all things*, Matt. xvii. 11. *i. e.* opened the kingdom of heaven to believers of all nations, Luke xvi. 16.] and is completed in Chriſt's coming with his ſaints in the glory of his Father at the laſt day. But whether ſome or all of theſe conjectures which I have mentioned be the reaſon of it, this is certain, that St. Paul ſpeaks of the work of redemption under the name of creation. So 2 Cor. v. 17. *If any one be in Chriſt*, καινη κτισις, *he is a new creature*, or, *it is a new creation.* And Gal. vi. 15. *In Chriſt Jeſus neither circumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion, but* καινη κτισις, *the new creation.*

"It is then to be conſidered, of which creation, τα παντα κτισαντι, who created all things, is here

to be underſtood. The buſineſs St. Paul is upon in this place, is to ſhew that God's purpoſe of taking in the Gentiles to be his people under the goſpel, was a myſtery unknown in former ages, and now under the kingdom of the Meſſiah committed to him to be preached to the world.

" This is ſo manifeſtly the deſign of St. Paul here, that nobody can miſtake it. Now, if the creation of the material world, of this viſible frame of ſun, moon, and ſtars, and heavenly bodies, that are over us, and of the earth we inhabit, hath no immediate relation, as it certainly hath not, to this myſtery, this deſign of God's to call the Gentiles into the kingdom of his ſon, it is to make St. Paul a very looſe writer and weak arguer, in the middle of a diſcourſe which he ſeems to lay ſo much ſtreſs on, and to preſs earneſtly on the Epheſians, [for he urges it more than once] to bring in things not at all to his purpoſe, and that are of no uſe to the buſineſs in hand. We cannot therefore avoid taking the creation, and things created, here to be thoſe of the *new creation*, (viz.) thoſe of which the kingdom of Chriſt, which was this new creation, was to be made up; and in that ſenſe, τα παντα κτισαντι δια Ιησυ Χριστυ, *who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt*, is a reaſon to ſhew why God kept his purpoſe of making the Gentiles meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the ſaints expreſſeth it, chap. ii. 10. *That they ſhould be his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works*, concealed from former ages, viz. becauſe this new creation was in Chriſt Jeſus, and ſo, proper to be preached and publiſhed

liſhed when he was now come; which is ſtrongly confirmed by the words of the following verſe, viz. that NOW, in its due time, by this new piece of workmanſhip of his, viz. *by the church, might be made known the manifold wiſdom of God.* This taking in the Gentiles into the kingdom of his ſon, and after that, the re-aſſuming again of the Jews, who had been rejected, St. Paul looks on as ſo great an inſtance, and diſplay of the wiſdom of God, that it makes him cry out, Rom. xi. 33. *Oh the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God; how unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out.*"

P. S. It muſt not be paſſed over, that the words, at the concluſion of this verſe, (*i. e.* thro' Jeſus Chriſt) are probably an interpolation, and that it ſhould end thus, " in God who created, or the creator of all things." The words are wanting in many of the beſt manuſcripts and ancient verſions of the New Teſtament, and are omitted by Tertullian, Jerome, Pelagius, Baſil, Cyril, Ambroſe, Theodoret. Our learned Mill, Mr. Wetſtein, and Bengelius, agree in caſhiering them as not belonging to the text. I wonder the accurate Mr. Bowyer did not put them in a parentheſis, in his late valuable edition of N. T. Mill thus accounts for their being inſerted by ſome over-pious tranſcriber. " Et quidem cum vix fieri poſſit, ut exemplaribus antiquiſſimis exciderint ſcribarum ſeu fraude ſive etiam incuria, verba adeo inſignia, præſertim ante tempora Arii, adjecta hoc loco crediderim interpretamenti gratia, ex illo Apoſtoli. Col. i. 16. εν αυτω εκτισθη τα παντα, &c."

Essay III.

The Order of the principal Events in the Goſpel Hiſtory.

HAVING, in the two preceding Eſſays, exhibited the arguments in favour of a harmony of the goſpels, upon the hypotheſis that the public miniſtry of Jeſus laſted only a year and a few months; I ſhall now proceed to adjuſt the order of the particular tranſactions in the goſpel hiſtory, and to give my reaſons, at large, for my arrangement of the principal facts. But theſe, I imagine, will be much more intelligible, if, in the firſt place, I juſt recite the facts, in the order in which I imagine them to have happened.

The reader will pleaſe to obſerve, that the ſubject of this and the following Eſſay has little or no dependence on the general hypotheſis I have endeavoured to ſupport in the preceding ones; ſince the order in which any number of events may be ſuppoſed to have taken place, may be conſidered without any regard to the time that elapſed in the ſucceſſion. In this caſe it is but ſubſtituting the word *paſſover* for *pentecoſt*, or the name of ſome other Jewiſh feaſt, and this Eſſay will ſuit any other hypotheſis concerning the duration of Chriſt's miniſtry.

As moſt Harmoniſts, I believe, are nearly agreed in the order of all the events preceding the baptiſm of Jeſus; at leaſt, as nothing new has occurred to me with reſpect to them, I ſhall begin my narration at that period; and, in order

to

to be as conciſe as poſſible, ſhall mention only ſuch facts as may be ſufficient to give a perſon who is tolerably acquainted with the New Teſtament, an idea of the order in which I ſhould diſpoſe the reſt.

After his baptiſm and temptation, Jeſus went into Galilee, and, at Cana, turned the water into wine. He then went to Capernaum, along with his mother, and the reſt of the family; and going from thence to Jeruſalem, at the firſt paſſover, held a converſation with Nicodemus. After this he made a ſhort ſtay in Judea; but the phariſees taking umbrage at his making diſciples there, he returned into Galilee; and, paſſing through Samaria, converſed with the woman at the well.

Being arrived at Cana, he was met by a nobleman from Capernaum, who intreated him to heal his ſon; and going from thence to that city; he called Peter and Andrew, James and John; and on the ſabbath following he cured a demoniac in the ſynagogue, and Peter's wife's mother in her own houſe, with many others. Theſe miracles brought ſuch a concourſe of people about him, that the next morning, before it was day, he withdrew into a ſolitary place, whither his diſciples reſorted to him; and, not chuſing to return to Capernaum, he made a circuit through the neighbouring towns and villages.

Great multitudes crowding to him from all quarters, he addreſſed to them his excellent ſermon on the mount. Preſently after he cured a leper, and not long after, entering again into

Capernaum, he healed the nobleman's ſervant. The day following he was at Nain, where he raiſed the widow's ſon; and from whence, to avoid another concourſe of people, he croſſed the ſea, ſtilling a tempeſt in his paſſage; and landing in the territory of Gadara, he cured the demoniacs when the ſwine were drowned.

Not making any ſtay in that country, he returned to Capernaum, and healed a paralytic perſon, who was let through the roof of the houſe. After this he walked out by the ſea ſide, and having called Matthew, he dined with him, and held a converſation with the diſciples of John. While he was diſcourſing with them, Jairus applies to him, to cure his daughter, who lay at the point of death. In his way he cured the woman who had the iſſue of blood, and after he returned from Jairus's houſe he gave ſight to two blind men, and cured a dumb demoniac.

Jeſus having made himſelf obnoxious to the phariſees by vindicating his diſciples for plucking ears of corn on a ſabbath day, and healing in the ſynagogue a man who had a withered hand, withdrew into a deſert place, and, on a mountain, ſet apart the twelve apoſtles.

The multitudes crowding to him again, he healed their ſick, and, among others, a blind and dumb demoniac; and when the phariſees aſcribed this cure to a correſpondence with Beelzebub, he diſcourſed concerning the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; and when they aſked of him a ſign from heaven, he gave them the ſign of the prophet Jonas; and among other awful denunciations, he related to them the parable of the unclean

unclean ſpirit. While he was talking, and probably with a good deal of earneſtneſs, on this occaſion, his mother and brethren deſire to ſpeak with him, which gave him an opportunity of expreſſing his ſuperior regard to his diſciples.

On the ſame day on which he held this diſcourſe, he went to the ſea ſide, and, for the greater convenience of ſpeaking, ſtood in a ſhip, while he delivered ſeveral parables to the people ſtanding on the ſhore; and, among others, that of the ſower, which he afterwards explained to his diſciples, reciting to them ſeveral others.

Leaving the neighbourhood of Capernaum, he went to Nazareth; and being rejected and having had his life attempted by his countrymen of that place, he went into the neighbouring villages; and ſeeing great multitudes, as ſheep without a ſhepherd, he had compaſſion on them, and commiſſioned the twelve apoſtles to preach to them, and heal their ſick.

In the abſence of the twelve, the diſciples of John apply to him, bringing a meſſuage from their maſter; and when they had left him, he diſcourſed with the multitude concerning John, and at the ſame time pronounced a woe upon the places in which moſt of his mighty works had been performed.

About this time Jeſus dined with Simon the phariſee, to whom, when he was diſguſted with the affectionate behaviour of a woman who had been a ſinner, he related the parable of the creditor and two debtors.

Jeſus hearing of the death of John the Baptiſt, retired by ſhip into a deſert place, whither the apoſtles

apoſtles reſorted to him, and where he fed a great multitude with five loaves and two fiſhes. Having ſent his diſciples away by ſhip, while he ſtayed to diſmiſs the company, he came to them in the night, walking on the ſea. They landed in the territory of Genneſaret; and the multitude, influenced by worldly motives, afterwards following him to Capernaum, he diſcourſed with them in ſo myſterious a manner concerning bread, that the greateſt part of thoſe who had followed him hitherto deſerted him.

At the feaſt of pentecoſt Jeſus cured the cripple at the pool of Betheſda, and diſcourſed with the Jews concerning his miſſion; but they ſeeking to kill him, he retreated again to Galilee, where he held a converſation with ſome phariſees, who had followed him from Jeruſalem, concerning traditions.

After this he went into the coaſts of Tyre and Sydon, where he healed the daughter of a Syrophenician woman; and being returned to Galilee, he cured a demoniac who was deaf, and had an impediment in his ſpeech. Being in a deſert place, he again fed a great multitude by a miracle. At Magdala he diſcourſed with the phariſees concerning the ſigns of the times, and at Bethſaida he cured a blind man.

After this he made an excurſion to the coaſts of Ceſarea Philippi, and there began to foretel his ſufferings, and future glory. His tranſfiguration happened ſix days after. Deſcending from the mount of transfiguration, he cured a demoniac child; and after ſeveral diſcourſes with his diſciples, and other incidents at Capernaum,

he

he took his final leave of Galilee. Travelling through Samaria, he was not received by the people of that country. Here, however, he cured the ten lepers.

On this journey he ſent out the Seventy; and being arrived at Jeruſalem, at the feaſt of Tabernacles, he diſcourſed with the Jews concerning his miſſion; reproved the woman who was taken in adultery, and cured a man who had been blind from his birth.

In the interval between the feaſt of Tabernacles and the feaſt of Dedication, I place all thoſe incidents and diſcourſes, which are related by Luke after his mention of Jeſus's having taken his final leave of Galilee, and before thoſe events that are cloſely connected with the hiſtory of his death, and for which I can find no other place, by means of a correſponding ſtory in ſome other evangeliſt. Here, therefore, I introduce the diſcourſe concerning the Galileans killed by Pilate, the parable of the good Samaritan, the wedding ſupper, the prodigal ſon, the rich man and Lazarus, and of the phariſee and publican, with ſome others.

At the feaſt of Dedication Jeſus, in the temple, publickly declared himſelf to be the Meſſiah, and the Jews thereupon ſeeking to kill him, he retired to the country beyond Jordan, where he held the diſcourſe concerning divorces, and the danger of riches; and where he bleſſed the children that were brought to him, &c.

From this country he made a journey into Judea, to raiſe from the dead his friend Lazarus; but having by this miracle, performed in the

the preſence of many of his enemies, greatly enraged the phariſees and rulers of the Jews, he retired to Ephraim, in the wilderneſs of Judea.

Journeying from theſe parts to Jeruſalem, before the ſecond paſſover; he again foretold his ſufferings, and paſſing through Jericho, in the neighbourhood of that town, he cured a blind man, and viſited Zaccheus.

Coming in view of Jeruſalem, he lamented over it; and being arrived at Bethany, he ſupped with Simon the leper, where Lazarus was preſent, and his ſiſter Mary anointed him; which gave ſuch offence to Judas Iſcariot, that from that time he formed a reſolution to betray him to his enemies, who were now, more than ever, intent upon putting him to death.

The next day he entered the city in triumph, and purged the temple. The morning following, on his return from Bethany (where he now lodged every night) he curſed the barren fig-tree (the effects of which were ſeen the next day) and held many diſcourſes in the temple.

In this manner he paſſed his time till the day before he ſuffered; on the evening of which he eat the paſſover with his diſciples; and Judas, whoſe treachery he had detected, having left them, he inſtituted the Lord's ſupper; and then diſcourſed with the eleven in a moſt affectionate manner, and foretold Peter's denial of him.

Leaving the houſe in which they had ſupped, and perhaps coming in view of the mount of Olives, he diſcourſed concerning the true vine, gave his diſciples the promiſe of the Comforter in his abſence from them; and, in a ſolemn prayer,

prayer, recommended them to the care and bleſſing of God his father.

Being arrived at Gethſemane, he was ſeized with an agony in a garden; and Judas arriving, with a company of armed men, and ſome of the Jewiſh rulers, he was conducted firſt to Annas, then to Caiaphas, and afterwards to Pilate; who, after ſending him to Herod, ſentenced him to be crucified.

The order of the ſubſequent tranſactions it is not to my purpoſe at preſent to conſider.

Such is the order in which I would chuſe to diſpoſe the leading events in the life of Chriſt, which the reader will perceive to be conſiderably different from that of Mr. Mann, and I believe alſo from that of all other Harmoniſts. In the next Eſſay I ſhall proceed to exhibit the reaſon of this arrangement, or the evidence of the harmony.

Essay IV.

The Evidence for the preceding Diſpoſition of the leading Facts in the Goſpel Hiſtory.

Section I.

General preliminary Remarks.

OF the many original hiſtories of the life of Chriſt, which were probably once extant, four only are come down to us; but they are abundantly ſufficient to confirm our faith in the truth of the facts. The external evidence of the authen-

authenticity of theſe books is remarkably ſtrong; and an attentive reader will be equally ſtruck with the internal evidence, to which my obſervations on the harmony of their hiſtories relate. None but the perſons to whom they are aſcribed, or, which is the ſame thing, with reſpect to us, perſons who enjoyed equal advantages for writing ſuch hiſtories, could have compoſed them.

It is the more probable that they wrote from their memory, and therefore that they actually heard and ſaw what they relate, as there is not, on the face of their writings, a ſingle trace of imagination, or of an attention to any thing that might ſerve to embelliſh their narrative. From the beginning to the end of all the evangeliſts, there appear no more marks of a capacity for fiction, than there are of an inclination to it.

Two of theſe hiſtorians, Matthew and John, were, in a great meaſure, eye witneſſes of what they relate. The two others, Mark and Luke, were not eye witneſſes, but appear to have been well informed concerning their ſubject. They all, however, ſeem to have been equally careleſs of the order of events; but with reſpect to the two former, nature has more than ſupplied the place of art. As the circumſtances of time and place are neceſſarily preſented to the mind of an eye witneſs, along with other circumſtances of any tranſaction, becauſe they were really co-exiſtent, and inſeparable from it, ſo the ideas of time and place will force themſelves upon the mind; and, unleſs the perſon who relates from his memory be particularly upon

upon his guard, they will, even unneceſſarily and improperly, intrude themſelves into the narrative.

This we ſee exemplified every time that a perſon, uninſtructed in the arts of ſpeaking and writing, tells a ſtory; and we have examples of it in the writings of Matthew and John, where we perceive more characters of time, and more marks of an orderly narrative, in the tranſitions from ſtory to ſtory, than in thoſe of Mark and Luke. Mark, however, has preſerved more of theſe circumſtances of events than Luke; ſo many that I can hardly perſuade myſelf that he was not preſent, at leaſt, at ſome of the tranſactions. And I think I have heard of an old tradition in favour of his having been one of the ſeventy diſciples.

Many good reaſons may be aſſigned for the neglect of the order of time in thoſe evangeliſts who were beſt acquainted with it. This is by no means the moſt natural, or the beſt method of relating events, as we ſee verified in every writer of lives, even thoſe who are the moſt methodical and exact; becauſe other relations have a ſtronger effect upon the mind than that of time, particularly a reſemblance in the cauſe or effect of any incidents.

Several circumſtances would contribute to throw irregularity into a hiſtory of Chriſt, written by one who was witneſs to it, and had often told it. It is probable that what was called *preaching Chriſt*, at the promulgation of chriſtianity, conſiſted chiefly in reciting the particulars of the life of Chriſt; ſo that the goſpels were the

ſubſtance

ſubſtance of the preaching, as it may be called, of the apoſtles and evangeliſts. In this caſe it cannot be ſuppoſed that they regularly began with the birth and ended with the death of Chriſt; but rather that ſingle incidents would be related occaſionally, as particular occaſions called for them; and, in time, all the ſtories would get quite other aſſociations, and be connected with one another various ways beſides that of the order in which they happened, and the longer they deferred writing their hiſtories, the fewer traces we might expect to find of this order. According to Dr. Lardner, the goſpels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, were all written about the year of Chriſt 64, and that of John in 68.

The cauſes that tended to make the evangeliſts inattentive to the order of time in which things happened, would not in the leaſt tend to alter or deprave the hiſtory itſelf, or make their teſtimony to all the facts leſs to be depended on. For as every diſtinct ſtory would neceſſarily be repeated intire, they would each of them fall into one uniform method of telling it; and all the parts of any ſtory would cohere perfectly, when the connection of the different ſtories with one another might be intirely loſt. Beſides, independent of conſtant and uniform repetition, the contiguous parts of one thing cannot but have a cloſer connection in the mind that contemplates them, than any two different things.

If we conſider the immediate object of the apoſtles and evangeliſts in preaching Chriſt, namely, to make their hearers good men, to af-

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fect mankind with a ſenſe of the truth and greatneſs of his character, that they might live in the firm belief and expectation of his ſecond coming, we ſhall not wonder at their not being ſolicitous about the order of the incidents in their hiſtory; for this was a circumſtance that had little apparent tendency to produce that effect. In this ſituation of things, it cannot be expected that perſons who had not attended Chriſt, ſhould ever get a diſtinct and orderly idea of the particulars of his life, ſince they who once had it would be in great danger of loſing it.

I would obſerve farther, that the confuſion that appears in our copies of the evangeliſts, with reſpect to the order of time, may have ariſen in part from the *tranſpoſition* of paragraphs and ſections in their works; nor is it difficult to account for this kind of diſorder. The evangeliſts having had no experience in writing books, and, except Luke, perhaps not having at firſt intended to write the life of their maſter in ſo full a manner as they have done, it is not improbable that they might write it, and even ſuffer it to be copied, in detached parts. Or, when they had completed their firſt plans, they might, on farther conſideration, and more perfect recollection, compoſe additional parts, and give directions where to inſert them in the former copies; which directions may have been miſtaken by the perſons whoſe copies have been tranſmitted to us. Or the writers themſelves, when they had made thoſe additions, might not be very attentive to the place in which they inſerted them;

as nothing, that they could imagine to be of any conſequence, depended upon it.

That none of the imperfect books are come down to us is no wonder, as every perſon, who was poſſeſſed of a copy, would be deſirous to make it complete, and ſuch copies only would be uſed by tranſcribers. Nor is it at all difficult to conceive how a copy, not the moſt perfect in point of arrangement, might come to be univerſally followed, when it was recommended by ſome higher conſideration. Even the early verſions may have been various with reſpect to arrangement of facts at firſt, and the order of the prevailing or ſtandard copies of the original Greek have been afterwards adopted by the tranſcribers of them. I would alſo refer your readers, for other cauſes of tranſpoſition, to what your learned correſpondent Vigilius has obſerved on that ſubject, vol. 1. p. 45, &c.

On all theſe accounts, whether I be cenſured as a bold and raſh critic or not, I think I may have reaſon and natural probability on my ſide, when I venture to tranſpoſe ſome parts of the evangelical hiſtory as it ſtands at preſent, if by this means the facts have a better connection.

Theſe obſervations reſpect the goſpels of Matthew and John only. The irregularities of Mark and Luke may be accounted for without any ſuch hypotheſis. It ſeems highly probable that Luke was never himſelf acquainted with the order of the occurrences, though he took pains to inquire concerning the truth of the

the facts, and arranged them in the beſt manner that he could.

I alſo pay but little regard to the order of Matthew's goſpel, before the hiſtory of his own call to attend upon Jeſus; and it is remarkable that, before that event, this evangeliſt has as few notes of time, or other marks of an orderly narrative as Luke. Of this circumſtance any perſon may ſatisfy himſelf, who will take the pains to look into his goſpel with that view.

In many caſes I am by no means ſatisfied with the attempts of any of the Harmoniſts, that I have ſeen, to reconcile the different accounts of what was manifeſtly the ſame tranſaction. There appear to me evident marks of the hiſtorians having conceived differently concerning the circumſtances of them, and I ſhall be far from concealing any of the obſervations I have made of this kind. I have obſerved before, that ſuch variations are favourable to the credibility of the account.

In ſome caſes, however, though the ſtories are told in a very different manner, the inconſiſtencies are only ſeeming ones, and when examined more cloſely will be found to vaniſh. I would gladly have taken ſome pains on this ſubject, but that I find I have been more than ſufficiently anticipated by my predeceſſors in the buſineſs of harmonizing. There is more room for being original in obſerving, or even in *acknowledging*, the variations and ſeeming contradictions in the different evangeliſts.

Notwithſtanding all thoſe ſources of confuſion and diſorder in the evangelical hiſtory, it ſeems

very poſſible for a perſon, who carefully attends to the nature of the events, and who will collect and compare all the notes of time, and other connections of particular events that have been preſerved by any of them, to reduce the narrative pretty nearly to its proper order.

In order to this, I have made Matthew and John my principal guides, and have not departed from the order of events in either of them, unleſs when the account of one of them is contrary both to thoſe of Mark and Luke, and alſo not ſo probable in itſelf. But I have made the leſs difficulty of departing from the order of events in our copies of Matthew and John, where I thought there was reaſon to ſuſpect that the parts of their narratives may have been tranſpoſed; and if this treatment will reſtore Matthew or John to the order of both Mark and Luke, I cannot but conſider it as an argument in favour of the tranſpoſition.

Section II.

Obſervations on the Order of Events before the Miſſion of the Twelve Apoſtles.

I Obſerved before, that, in that part of the evangelical hiſtory which precedes the call of Matthew, there are few traces of an orderly connection of events in his goſpel. Since Mark, therefore, has inſerted the notes of time belonging to that part of the hiſtory with remarkable particularity, for a perſon who is not ſuppoſed to have been preſent, I prefer his order, eſpecially where it is the ſame with that of Luke.

1. Mark,

1. Mark, for example, is ſo expreſs in ſaying that Jeſus cured Peter's wife's mother on the ſabbath after his arrival at Capernaum, and the very ſame day on which he cured the demoniac in the ſynagogue, and performed thoſe other aſtoniſhing miracles which occaſioned his great reputation in thoſe parts, and made it inconvenient to him to continue in the town any longer, that I cannot but adopt his order, in preference to that of Matthew; who mentions thoſe events later in the hiſtory, but before the time of his own call to attend Jeſus.

2. Matthew, after mentioning Jeſus's leaving Judea to go into Galilee, ſays, iv. 13. *And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum*; which ſeems to imply that Jeſus made, at leaſt, a ſhort ſtay at Nazareth before his arrival at Capernaum. But it appears to me, that when Jeſus left Judea to go into Galilee, after the firſt paſſover, he either was not at Nazareth at all, or only juſt went through it in his way to Cana, from which place it is certain he went to Capernaum.

John makes no mention of Jeſus's being at Nazareth, though he is very particular in reciting the events of the firſt paſſover, and the ſeveral ſtages and incidents of his progreſs from Jeruſalem to Capernaum at that time, which are omitted by all the other evangeliſts.

There is a kind of chaſm between the 43d and the 44th verſe of the fourth chapter of John, which can only be ſupplied by ſuppoſing the evangeliſt had mentioned, or at leaſt tacitly referred to Jeſus's not chuſing to call, or at

leaſt not chuſing to make any ſtay at Nazareth at this time.

John iv. 43. *Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee.*

[But he did not go to Nazareth.]

44. *For Jeſus himſelf teſtified, that a prophet has no honour in his own country.*

45. *Then when he was come into Galilee the Galileans received him, having ſeen all the things that he did at Jeruſalem; for they alſo went unto the feaſt.*

46. *So Jeſus came again into Cana,* &c.

The evangeliſt's mentioning the Galileans receiving Jeſus as ſoon as he came into their country, doth but ill agree with what Jeſus himſelf obſerved, in the verſe preceding, that a prophet has no honour in his own country, but upon the ſuppoſition, that thoſe he firſt applied to were not his countrymen of Nazareth.

Beſides, the nobleman of Capernaum, who is ſaid to have ſet out to meet our Lord as ſoon as he heard of his arrival in Galilee, went to Cana; ſo that it is not probable that he had heard of his being, or at leaſt of his intention, or attempt to make any ſtay at Nazareth. And the cure of this nobleman's ſon is expreſsly ſaid by John iv. 54. to have been the ſecond miracle that Jeſus performed after his arrival in Galilee from Judea; meaning, probably, from the time of his being baptized; and that the firſt miracle was that at Cana of turning the water into wine.

The miracles related by Mark, v. 23, &c. and which were performed at Capernaum, ſeem

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to have been the more immediate occaſion of Jeſus's great fame in Galilee, and therefore muſt have been performed ſoon after his arrival in that country.

It is poſſible, after all, that by *leaving Nazareth* (καταλιπων Ναζαρετ) Matthew might mean his having left it, or the family having quitted their habitation there, ſome time before; for the participle being of the *aoriſt* tenſe, it ought to have been rendered *and having left Nazareth.*

Or it may mean *paſſing by Nazareth, i. e.* not chuſing to call there, he went rather to Capernaum.

Luke, indeed, ſeems to have imagined that Jeſus preached a ſabbath in Nazareth, when they attempted his life, before his going to Capernaum; but it is much more probable, from the accounts of both Matthew and Mark, that the time when Jeſus was rejected by the people of Nazareth was ſome time after he had been at Capernaum; and, upon the whole, it appears to me, to have been juſt before the miſſion of the Twelve, and not long before his leaving Galilee to go to the feaſt of pentecoſt.

Beſides, Luke's own account, compared with itſelf only, has not the marks of perfect conſiſtency; for, according to him, our Lord ſays to the people of Nazareth, iv. 23. *Ye will ſay, Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do alſo here in thine own country.* If this could have been ſaid before he had been at Capernaum, it muſt have been by way of prophecy, concerning what he was to do there, and what they would ſay to him afterwards, which I think is

not an eaſy interpretation. The mention that Luke makes of his arrival at Capernaum, after his rejection at Nazareth, has all the marks of his firſt arrival there, iv. 31. *And he came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the ſabbath day*; and *they were aſtoniſhed at his doctrine, for his word was with power.* Theſe were evidently the effects of their firſt hearing him.

3. It is not quite certain whether Jeſus had entered Capernaum before the call of Peter, &c. or not. If he had, it ſhould ſeem that he could not have made any ſtay there before that tranſaction, or have done any thing to make him conſpicuous (except the cure of the nobleman's ſon performed at Cana) for it was on the ſabbath after the call of Peter that his very great fame in that place commenced. Matthew mentions his *dwelling at Capernaum* before the call of Peter, but Mark doth not mention his entering that city till after that event. One would naturally conclude, from the account of Mark, that Jeſus, travelling from Cana towards Capernaum, came to ſome part of the ſea coaſt, where he met with Peter and the other diſciples, and having called them to attend him, entered with them into the city, juſt before the commencement of the ſabbath day.

4. Luke ſpeaks of the call of Peter, &c. as an event ſubſequent to our Lord's preaching in Capernaum and the neighbouring towns, and mentions the additional circumſtance of the miraculous draught of fiſhes as preceding their call. Thoſe diſciples certainly attended Jeſus before

before the ſabbath on which he healed Peter's wife's mother; and they can hardly be ſuppoſed to have been called in the very ſame manner (our Lord uſing the very ſame words) twice. If the firſt call, related by Matthew and Mark, was not effectual, there ſeems to have been nothing in the ſecond, ſuppoſed by ſome to be related by Luke, to make it more ſo. I therefore ſuppoſe that they had only one call to attend Chriſt after his arrival in Galilee. Indeed, from the manner in which Luke relates the circumſtances of this call, it is evident that he had no idea of any other call having preceded it. It muſt be obſerved that Peter and Andrew, and perhaps James and John alſo, had been the diſciples of Jeſus in Judea, and therefore were prepared to obey his call.

5. The diſcourſe commonly called *the ſermon on the mount*, related Matt. v. vi. and vii. and the diſcourſe related Luke vi. 20, &c. called by ſome *the ſermon on the plain*, agree in ſo many circumſtances, both in the ſubject of them, and the incidents attending them, that I have no doubt that they were the ſame. They both followed our Lord's having retired to a mountain, were addreſſed to the diſciples, in the preſence of multitudes aſſembled from the ſame places. They begin and end with the ſame words, and there is no other difference in the contents of them, but that the diſcourſe in Matthew is fuller, and has ſeveral things omitted by Luke. Both the diſcourſes are followed by Jeſus's going into Capernaum, and healing the Centurion's ſervant. Any perſon, eſpecially one in the cir-

circumſtance of a public teacher, may well be ſuppoſed to have occaſion to repeat the ſame diſcourſes, but that ſo many of the ſame incidents ſhould attend the ſame diſcourſe is not probable. Matthew's ſaying that Jeſus was ſat down after he had gone up the mountain, and Luke's ſaying that he ſtood on the plain, when he healed the ſick before the diſcourſe, are no inconſiſtencies; or if they were, are of no moment at all, conſidering that we do not know that either of thoſe hiſtorians were preſent. It is not, however, improbable but that Matthew, who lived in that neighbourhood, might be one of the multitude that attended on the occaſion, and his relating the diſcourſe ſo circumſtantially and fully is much in favour of this conjecture.

With reſpect to the circumſtances preceding the diſcourſe, they were, perhaps, as follows: Jeſus had been up the mountain, along with his diſciples, but ſeeing the multitudes at the foot of it, he came down among them on the plain, and healed their ſick; and then went a little way up the hill, or aſcended ſome eminence at the foot of it, for the advantage of being better heard, while he diſcourſed to the people ſtill ſtanding on the plain.

6. According to Luke, the leprous perſon, who applied to our Lord after the ſermon on the mount, was cured in a certain city; but according to Matthew, it was after he came down from the mountain, and before he entered into Capernaum. It probably happened in ſome other town that he went through, in his way to Capernaum.

7. From

7. From the time that Matthew was called to attend upon our Lord, I think his authority indiſputably preferable to that of Mark or Luke, or even to them both. I have, therefore, adopted his account of the order of events on the day that he was called, the particulars of which he can leaſt of all be ſuppoſed ever to have forgotten. He ſays, ix. 18. that it was while Jeſus was talking with the diſciples of John, after dining at his houſe, that Jairus came to deſire him to cure his daughter. But both Mark and Luke expreſsly ſay, that Jairus met him with this requeſt as he landed, after having been over the ſea, where he had ſtilled the tempeſt, and cured the demoniacs among the tombs; and they mention the call of Matthew a conſiderable time before.

8. According to Luke, the ſabbath on which the diſciples plucked the ears of corn, was not the ſame with that on which Jeſus reſtored the withered hand in the ſynagogue. But it ſhould ſeem that Matthew and Mark, according to the eaſieſt conſtruction of their language, ſuppoſe both theſe events to have happened on the ſame day.

After reciting the diſcourſe in the corn-fields, Matthew ſays, xii. 9. *And when he was departed thence* [*i. e.* probably from the corn-fields] he went into their ſynagogue, *i. e.* the ſynagogue belonging to the ſame Jews with whom he had been diſcourſing. And Mark, after reciting the ſame diſcourſe, ſays, iii. 1. *And entering again into their ſynagogue,* as if he had been there before on the ſame day. And, according to

to Reland, the Jews did aſſemble in their ſynagogues both morning and evening, on the ſabbath, as well as on certain other days. I therefore ſuppoſe the two ſabbaths mentioned by Luke (who certainly was not ſo well informed as Matthew, and probably not ſo well as Mark) to have been only one.

9. The diſcourſe concerning the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is introduced by Luke after his account of the cure of the dumb demoniac, which is related by Matthew ix. 22, &c. But this evangeliſt introduces it after the cure of a demoniac that was both blind and dumb, mentioned xii. 22, &c. I have followed the order of Matthew. It is poſſible, however, that they may not really differ; as the demoniac mentioned by Luke might have been blind as well as dumb, though he has not mentioned that circumſtance.

10. Luke viii. 19. repreſents our Lord's mother and brethren inquiring for him after he had related the parable of the ſower, but according to Matthew and Mark, this inquiry was made after the diſcourſe concerning the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which the former of theſe evangeliſts ſay was delivered in the former part of the ſame day. In favour of the probability of the former it may be ſaid, that, being pretty late in the day, his relations might think he would be quite exhauſted; and in favour of the latter, that his ſubject would lead him to ſpeak with peculiar earneſtneſs and vehemence. Luke ſeems not to have ſuppoſed that the parable of the ſower was delivered from a ſhip.

11. The

11. The obſervation concerning the candle and the buſhel, and the admonitions, *Take heed how ye hear*, and *To him that hath ſhall more be given*, follow one another in the ſame order in Mark and Luke; and are in both introduced after the parable of the ſower. In Mark they are ſucceeded by another parable concerning ſowing. But in Matthew all the above-mentioned particulars make part of the ſermon on the mount. I make no difficulty of admitting that our Lord might repeat the ſame obſervations and admonitions again and again; but I do not think that the place aſſigned to theſe in Mark and Luke is quite natural. But that both theſe writers, who, I am perſuaded had not ſeen each other's goſpels till they had compoſed their own, ſhould arrange theſe things, that appear to have little or no connection, in the ſame order, is rather remarkable. It is not, however, the only inſtance of the kind, that will occur to a perſon who ſhall attentively peruſe the goſpels. I ſometimes think that theſe ſeemingly odd coincidences may have ariſen from their having ſeen one another's goſpels, after they had written their own, and adding from the others (but in their own words and manner) what they thought proper.

12. Mark ſays, iv. 36. that after Jeſus had delivered the parable of the ſower, &c. from the ſhip, *they took him even as he was in the ſhip*; that at this time he ſtilled the tempeſt, and, landing on the other ſide, cured the demoniacs. But, according to Matthew, xiii. 36. Jeſus *went into a houſe* after delivering thoſe parables, and the voyage croſs the ſea, when he cured the demoniacs,

moniacs, had happened before. Both thoſe writers are very expreſs in noting theſe very different circumſtances of this tranſaction. I have adhered to the account of Matthew, as unqueſtionably an eye-witneſs. 234

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

As you have already honoured ſome of my thoughts on ſcripture ſubjects with an admiſſion into your valuable collection, I am encouraged to ſend the annexed diſſertation as a candidate for the like favour, and am, with great eſteem,

A hearty Well-wiſher to your deſign,

EUSEBIUS.

A Diſſertation on the Tranſfiguration of Jeſus.

THE tranſfiguration of our Lord, deſcribed by three of the evangeliſts, Matt. xvii. 1—9. Mark ix. 2—10. Luke ix. 28—36. appears to have been a very wonderful event, and, I preſume, engages the ſpecial notice of every one, who reads his hiſtory with any degree of attention; but for the particulars of it I refer to the holy writers themſelves.

The object of my preſent enquiry is the *deſign* of it; or, what proportionable *purpoſes* this tranſaction was calculated to ſerve.

I ſhall paſs very briefly over what others have advanced on this ſubject; particularly Dr. M'Knight,

M'Knight, in his Harmony, ſec. 71. and Dr. Benſon, in his Life of Chriſt, ch. viii. ſec. 8.

1. It is very probable that one intention of this extraordinary ſcene, was to confirm the faith of the three leading diſciples, who were admitted to be witneſſes of it, in the divine miſſion and authority of *Jeſus*, as *the Chriſt, the ſon of the living God*, according to the profeſſion which Peter had already made, ſee Matt. xvi. 16. to obviate the ill effects of the ſhock which our Lord's prediction of his ſufferings and death had made on their minds; v. 21, &c. and to prepare them to continue ſteadfaſt in their faith, notwithſtanding the accompliſhment of this prediction ſome time after at Jeruſalem. But I cannot think this a principal intention; becauſe, the reſt of the diſciples had been equally ſhocked at the prediction, and would be diſtreſſed at their maſter's actual ſufferings and death, and therefore ſtood in equal need of this confirmation of their faith; but ſo far were they from being thus favoured, that the three diſciples were expreſsly charged *to tell the viſion to no man*, not even to their fellow diſciples, *until the ſon of man be riſen again from the dead.*

2. Without doubt, it was a capital intention of this tranſient diſplay of celeſtial glory inveſting the Lord Jeſus, and of the divine teſtimony given to him out of the Shechinah, or cloud of glory (the ancient and well known ſymbol of the preſence of God) to confirm to the three witneſſes of it, and to all who ſhould afterwards receive their teſtimony concerning it, the truth and

and certainty of the declarations which Jeſus had already made, and ſhould afterwards make, concerning the glory, dominion, and kingdom, wherewith his Father would inveſt him in reward of his ſufferings and obedience unto death. Six or eight days before Jeſus had ſaid to his diſciples and the multitude, *The ſon of man ſhall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then he ſhall reward every man according to his works*, Matt. xvi. 27. And, *whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me and of my words in this adultrous and ſinful generation, of him alſo ſhall the ſon of man be aſhamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels*, Mark viii. 38. where, doubtleſs, he refers to his coming in glory to judge the world at the laſt day; but leſt they ſhould conclude, that *then* only would his kingdom and glory commence, or be firſt diſplayed, he adds, *Verily I ſay unto you, there be ſome ſtanding here, which ſhall not taſte of death, till they ſee the ſon of man coming in his kingdom*, Matt. xvi. 28. or till they have ſeen the kingdom of God come with power, Mark ix. 1. *i. e.* till they have ſeen a diſplay of the kingdom and power of the ſon of man in the puniſhment of the unbelieving and incorrigible Jews, the deſtruction of Jeruſalem and the temple, and the complete abolition of the Moſaic inſtitutions. I cannot think, that our Lord refers here at all, to the diſplay of glory to be exhibited a few days after on the mount of transfiguration; for in that caſe it doth not ſeem at all probable, that he would have employed ſuch a mode of expreſſion *(there be ſome ſtanding here which ſhall not taſte of death)*

as

as could not fail to direct the ideas of his hearers to a much more distant period of time. For similar declarations, of his future glory and kingdom, made after this, see, among other places, Matt. xix. 28. xxv. 31. Luke xxiv. 26. Now, what more striking or satisfactory proof of the certain truth of these declarations could be given to the three disciples, and to all who afterwards gave credit to their report, than the facts exhibited on the holy mount? Nothing could more effectually support them under all difficulties they might suffer for his sake, assure them of his all-sufficient protection over his followers, and ability to fulfil all his promises to them; or animate them with earnest hopes of his *coming again, to receive them to himself, that where he is, they may be also; and behold that glory which he had with the Father before the world was.*

St. Peter leads us to consider this purpose of the transfiguration, by the application himself makes of it in the first chap. of his 2d epistle, where, having reminded those to whom he wrote that they had been called *to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature.*—ver. 3, 4. he urges them to aspire after the several moral excellencies, which are consonant to their profession, privileges and hopes; *giving diligence to make your calling and election sure; for, if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministred unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, v. 10, 11. He then promises, v. 12—15. to take all proper

meaſures, that they might *have theſe things always in remembrance, i. e.* their duties and hopes as chriſtians.

In order to imprint theſe things more deeply on their hearts, he reminds them of what he had formerly teſtified concerning Chriſt's future coming in power and great glory, and now informs them of the ſenſible evidence and diſplay of the glory and majeſty of Jeſus, which had been exhibited in the preſence of himſelf and two others of his fellow diſciples on the mount of transfiguration, and, conſequently, of the ſecurity thereby given for the full accompliſhment of all the *exceeding great and precious promiſes* made to his faithful followers, and particularly, of *an entrance being adminiſtered unto them abundantly into the everlaſting kingdom of their Lord and ſaviour Jeſus Chriſt*, ſee v. 16, 17, 18. *For we have not followed cunningly deviſed fables, when we wade known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; but were eye witneſſes of his majeſty. For he received from God the Father, honour and glory, when there came ſuch a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved ſon, in whom I am well pleaſed. And this voice, which came from heaven, we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.*

But what I would particularly recommend to conſideration, having not obſerved it noticed by others, is,

3. That it ſeems probable, that one capital purpoſe of the transfiguration was to exhibit, to the three witneſſes of it, a ſenſible demonſtration, and, to all others who ſhould afterwards credit

credit their teſtimony, a ſtriking evidence, that Jeſus is indeed the perſon of whom the prophets ſpake under ſuch eminent titles and characters; and to give aſſurance of the truth and certain accompliſhment of all thoſe glorious things they had predicted concerning him.

To refer to a few only of theſe prophecies: See Pſalm ii. 6—*end.* Pſalm cx. Iſaiah ix. 6, 7. xlii. 1—7. xlix. 1—9. Daniel ix. 25. vii. 9—14. Upon theſe predictions the Jews built their expectations of the ſenſible and worldly power and dominion of the Meſſiah; and on the laſt of thoſe now referred to they ſeem to have grounded the demand of *the ſign from heaven*, which they repeatedly made upon Jeſus with ſo much earneſtneſs, to prove himſelf the Chriſt; and to the ſame prophecy, and their expectation built upon it, probably, our Lord referred, when he ſaid to the high-prieſt and council; *Hereafter ſhall ye ſee the ſon of man ſitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.* Luke xxvi. 64. It is true that theſe expectations of the Jews were erroneous, and that in the order of the divine œconomy, as ſignified by the prophets, the glory and kingdom of the Meſſiah was to be preceded by a ſtate of humiliation and ſuffering: or as Jeſus told the phariſees, who demanded, *when the kingdom of God ſhould come*, Luke xvii. 20. that before *the ſon of man is revealed* (*i. e.* in his kingdom) *firſt muſt he ſuffer many things, and be rejected of this generation*, v. 25. and to the two diſciples in the way to Emmaus, *O fools, and ſlow of heart to believe all that the prophets have ſpoken! Ought not Chriſt to*

have ſuffered theſe things, and ſo *to enter into his glory?* Yet as all the prophetic characters and predictions concerning the perſon, humiliations and ſufferings of the Meſſiah, were verified and confirmed in Jeſus during his abode on earth, it ſeemed highly expedient, that ſome proper meaſure ſhould be employed to determine and appropriate unto him the illuſtrious titles and characters alſo, which had been given to the Meſſiah by the prophets, and aſcertain the ſure accompliſhment of all the glorious predictions, relative to the dominion of the Meſſiah, by Jeſus, after he ſhould be exalted to his kingdom; otherwiſe, the evidence that Jeſus is the Meſſiah, deduced from prophecy, would remain imperfect, and many doubts might naturally ariſe in the minds of men, whether the illuſtrious characters, given by the prophets to the Meſſiah, ought to be aſcribed to him, and whether the grand purpoſes of the Meſſiah's kingdom, which had been ſo long the prime objects of the people's expectation, ſhould in any manner be accompliſhed by him. Now, ſuch a meaſure, was the transfiguration; which could not fail to give perfect ſatisfaction to the three apoſtles, who were witneſſers of the illuſtrious ſcene, and to all others, who ſhould afterwards receive their report, that Jeſus is indeed *the perſon* of whom it had been ſaid, *Thou art my ſon, this day have I begotten thee. Aſk of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance,* &c. *The Lord ſaid unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footſtool, &c.*

That

That he is the child which ſhould be born, the ſon which ſhould be given; and the government ſhall be on his ſhoulder, &c. That he was the perſon intended in Daniel's viſion, when he ſaw *one like the ſon of man come with the clouds of heaven, and come to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him; and there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages ſhould ſerve him; his dominion is an everlaſting dominion, which ſhall not paſs away, and his kingdom that which ſhall not be deſtroyed.* In ſhort, that every great thing the prophets had ſpoken concerning the Meſſiah was meant of *him*, and that he would be fully able to accompliſh all the glorious purpoſes foretold of the Meſſiah's kingdom, when he ſhould enter into the glory prepared for him.

I am the more ſatisfied, that this was one principal purpoſe of the wonderful tranſaction under conſideration, becauſe, if I miſtake not, St. Peter leads us to conſider it in this view alſo in the words immediately following thoſe I referred to above, 2 Peter i. 19. *We have alſo a more ſure word of prophecy*; ſo the paſſage ſtands in our verſion, but I apprehend, it is ill tranſlated, and has been much miſunderſtood and perverted.

The author of *a diſcourſe of the grounds and reaſons of the chriſtian religion*, taking the paſſage as it ſtands in our verſion, very artfully repreſents it as an *apoſtolical declaration*, "That prophecy is a ſtronger argument (*i. e.* for the truth of chriſtianity) than a miracle, which depends upon external evidence and teſtimony." If then

he could have proved, as he attempted, that the argument from prophecy for the truth of chriſtianity, as managed and applied by the writers of the New Teſtament, is abſurd and ridiculous, the inference would have been clear, that chriſtianity is deſtitute of juſt grounds and reaſons. To obviate this formidable objection, the late Biſhop of London, (Dr. Sherlock) in his firſt diſcourſe on the uſe and intent of prophecy, conſiders theſe words as relating only to *the power and coming* of the Lord Jeſus, ſpoken of in the 16th v. *i. e.* his ſpeedy coming, "in power and glory, to deliver the faithful, and to take vengeance of the ungodly and unbelievers." Now of *this*, he thinks the word of prophecy, comprehending the predictions of the New as well as of the Old Teſtament, is a ſurer evidence than any miracles or wonderful appearances whatſoever. But, may it not be replied? That the miracles which Jeſus wrought, and the expreſs atteſtations which God gave to him by the voice from heaven, were the evidences, that proved the truth and certainty of all his declarations, promiſes and predictions. His predictions, therefore *declared* what things ſhould come to paſs, but the miracles *proved*, or made it *ſure* that they ſhould come to paſs.

Beſides, the appearances and the voice out of the cloud on the mount of transfiguration, conſidered alone, or diſtinct from the predictions, afford no evidence at all of the coming of Chriſt in power and glory to deliver the faithful, and to take vengeance of the ungodly and unbelievers. The deſign and effect of them was to authenticate the declarations of him, whom we were then

then commanded to hear; St. Peter therefore could not intend to place them in oppoſition to each other, and form a compariſon between them, as different evidences of the ſame ſubject. Let me add, that it ſeems moſt reaſonable to underſtand the apoſtle to mean by *the power and coming of Chriſt*, his coming in glory to *miniſter an entrance abundantly* to his faithful followers *into his everlaſting kingdom*, v. 11. of which he ſaith, in the intermediate verſes, that he ſhall endeavour *that they may have theſe things always in remembrance*, v. 15. *For* (he adds) *we have not followed cunningly deviſed fables*, &c.

Another learned Biſhop (Chandler) not approving (as it ſhould ſeem) of a compariſon between the evidences of miracles and prophecy, and of a preference given to the latter, either in relation to chriſtianity in general, or any particular article of it, ſuppoſes, that St. Peter meant only, that the word of prophecy is *ſurer* than cunningly deviſed fables, ſuch as the Jews and falſe teachers employed to ſupport their pretences, but which he ſtrenuouſly diſclaims. But it ſeems hard to conceive, that St. Peter would ever deſcend to admit, much leſs to form a compariſon between any real evidences of the truth of the goſpel, and what the very terms import to be altogether void of evidence, or validity.

After having mentioned ſuch diſtinguiſhed writers, perhaps, it may be thought indecent to intimate a ſuſpicion, that poſſibly all this embarraſſment may have ariſen from the impreſſions which the words of our verſion have made on men's minds, and a neglect of due attention to

St. Peter's own words in the original: Και εχομεν βεβαιοτερον τον προφητικον λογον, which I will venture to tranſlate, *And we have the word of the prophets more ſure.* This tranſlation is, I think, as literal and exact as may be, and, if admitted, will take away all idea of a compariſon between the two kinds of evidence of chriſtianity in general, or of any predicted event relative to it, in particular. St. Peter's meaning appears to be this: The ſpecimen of Chriſt's glory and majeſty, of which we were eye-witneſſes, and the ſolemn atteſtation to him, which we diſtinctly heard pronounced by God the Father out of the cloud of glory which overſhadowed him, rendered all the predictions of the prophets much *more ſure* to us. More ſure, as to their authenticity; more ſure, as to their import and meaning; more ſure, as to their full accompliſhment in due time. We were *aſſured* thereby that Jeſus is the perſon to whom thoſe predictions referred, and that he is able and will certainly fulfil them.

The compariſon imported in the word βεβαιοτερον relates only to the ſtate, in which the prophecies appeared to the apoſtles *before* and *after* the transfiguration; *before* they appeared obſcure, uncertain, and involved in doubts; but *afterwards*, certain, ſtrong and bright. Let us ſuppoſe, that the diſciples, during their preſence at that illuſtrious ſcene, had poſſeſſed a ſtate of mind ſufficiently calm to enable them to recollect the whole ſeries of the ancient prophecies, relative to the glory of the Meſſiah and his kingdom; what muſt they have thought of them?

or

or when afterwards they did at leiſure recollect and compare them with what they had ſeen and heard on the holy mount, what were their conceptions and ſentiments of them?—doubtleſs, far different from, and much ſuperior to all they had ever formed before.

It is obſervable, that our tranſlators have themſelves rendered διὰ γραφων προφητικων, in Rom. xvi. 26. *by the ſcriptures of the prophets*; which renders them leſs excuſable in rendering τον λογον προφητικον, in Peter, *a word of prophecy*.

It may perhaps be thought ſtrange, that, of the three witneſſes of this wonderful tranſaction, one only ſhould atteſt it to the world in writing. One of them, (James) was indeed pretty ſoon cut off by Herod (Acts xii. 2.) and wrote nothing; but why has not John recorded it in his goſpel? perhaps he might think it ſufficient, that the three other evangeliſts, who had already written the life of Jeſus, and whoſe goſpels he probably ſaw before he penned his own, had recorded it very exactly; and he ſeems to avoid carefully moſt things which they had mentioned, and ſtudies to ſupply thoſe things which they had omitted, or mentioned briefly. However, I apprehend John alſo has, in few words, given us his confirmation of the truth of what the other evangeliſts relate concerning the transfiguration. It is in the firſt chapter of his goſpel, v. 14. where when he ſays, *The Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth*; he inſerts this parentheſis, *And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, i. e.* though while he abode amongſt us he veiled his glory in a tabernacle

bernacle of fleſh, emitting, in common, only the milder rays of grace and truth, yet *once* we were admitted to ſee the ſplendor of his glory; and, indeed, it was a glory worthy of the only begotten of the Father, as the Father himſelf ſolemnly acknowledged him at that time to be.

I ſhall conclude with obſerving; that to repreſent to our thoughts the Lord Jeſus, in the midſt of that wonderful diſplay of his majeſty and glory, with all the particulars that attend it, then to look back to the predictions of the ancient prophets which were confirmed, illuſtrated and appropriated to him thereby, and forward to the hopes ſet before us in the goſpel, all which were alſo *aſſured* to us, by that tranſaction, every impartial conſiderer muſt, I think, allow, that the *purpoſes* were proportionate to the wonderful *meaſure*; and various ſubjects of pleaſing and profitable reflection will occur to the ſerious believers in Jeſus.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

I AM ſorry to find, by your laſt number, that my attempt to remove Pyrrho's ſcruples concerning the propriety of ſome parts of the conduct of Peter and Paul, have not been ſo ſucceſsful as I wiſhed. I beg the favour of a ſmall portion more of your paper, for a few notes upon ſome things he hath been pleaſed to offer by way of reply.

1. The

1. The notion which I conceive, and have endeavoured to convey, concerning the miracles recorded in the New Teſtament, is, *that they were extraordinary effects, produced by the operation of the power of God, ſo connected with, and conſequent upon the words or actions of thoſe who were employed in producing them, as was ſufficient to teſtify to others, that God was with thoſe perſons, and that they really ſpake and acted by divine direction and authority, in thoſe inſtances, wherein they profeſſed to do ſo.* Now I own, I do not yet perceive what more can be wanted to any particular fact, which anſwers this deſcription, to conſtitute it properly *miraculous*, or to produce the proper effect of a miracle *i. e.* a reaſonable conviction, that the perſons ſo employed have indeed a divine commiſſion and authority; neither can I perceive, that it is neceſſary to conſtitute any fact miraculous; that the perſon, who is the viſible agent, have the power which effects it, ſo committed and entruſted to his own poſſeſſion, as that he can exert it *when* and *how* he pleaſes, *diſcreetly* or *indiſcreetly*. It ſeems to me, that any power whatever, ſo committed and poſſeſſed, would almoſt ceaſe to be miraculous, and become ſcarcely diſtinguiſhable from natural powers; however, all indiſcreet exertions of ſuch power would ſubvert the proper purpoſe of miracles, in exhibiting evidence of a divine commiſſion; for the indiſcretion and wrong, attending the fact, would demonſtrate, that God was not with, nor authorized the agent in that inſtance at leaſt; and would afford a ſtrong preſumption againſt him in any other. I therefore conclude, that no one, no fallible perſon,

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at leaſt, ever had this power ſo committed to him.

I own I have acknowledged, that the apoſtles were *inſtrumental* in the miracles wrought by them, and yet ſaid, that they were effected by the *immediate* operation of God; nor do I yet ſee the inconſiſtency of theſe expreſſions. Pyrrho cannot but know, that there are very various degrees of *inſtrumentality*, yet all of them (according to the conſtant uſage of language) properly enough denominated ſo. The wonderful effects being connected with, following directly upon, and, to outward appearance, produced by the words or actions of the viſible agents, the apoſtles, they may reaſonably be called the *inſtruments*, and even ſaid to have wrought the miracle, though the power actually effecting was the immediate operation of God. N. B. I do not recollect that I have any where allowed (as Pyrrho intimates, p. 61. line 1.) that God ever intruſted his power with the apoſtles for *any ſeaſon* to uſe at their diſcretion, or ſo as that they might abuſe it, or exert it indiſcreetly. If I have, it was an overſight; that is the notion I have oppoſed, as appears from what Pyrrho quotes from me lower in the ſame page.

2. Pyrrho muſt pardon me, if I think, that the caſe of Moſes, which he adduces, is on *my* part rather than his. On a review of the ſtory, nothing appears that leads me to think, that Moſes poſſeſſed the miraculous power of cauſing water to flow out of the rock, when and how he pleaſed; nor when he was commanded to *take the rod and gather the aſſembly together*, *he*

he and Aaron his brother, and ſpeak to the rock before their eyes, and it ſhall give forth its water, Num. xx. 6. doth it follow, that the power which ſhould operate to the producing the wonderful effect was a power reſiding in himſelf, his brother, or the rod, but only, that this commanded action ſhould be a *ſignal* or *token* to the people of the operation of the power of God. And though it be added, *and thou ſhalt bring forth to them water out of the rock; ſo thou ſhalt give the congregation and their beaſts drink*, this can refer only to his viſible agency or inſtrumentality in giving the ſignal. For, what ſeems full to my purpoſe, the cenſure and ſentence which was afterwards paſſed upon him for miſbehaviour, was not for an abuſe or indiſcreet uſe of miraculous powers, but for an indiſcreet indulgence of his own paſſions, which betrayed him, firſt, into a neglect of that obſervance and obedience which he owed to the divine direction; he was commanded only to *ſpeak* to the rock, but, probably, doubting of the ſucceſs of words only, he ſpake not, but ſmote the rock twice. Secondly, he uſed indiſcreetly the natural power of ſpeech, by uttering a faulty expreſſion, in which he ſeemed to arrogate to himſelf and his brother the power of producing the miracle, v. 10. *Here, now, ye rebels: muſt* WE *fetch you water out of this rock!* Indeed, upon Pyrrho's ſuppoſition, they did ſo. But let us ſee the divine cenſure, v. 12. *Becauſe ye believed me not* (that ſpeaking to the rock would produce the effect) *to ſanctify me* (or do me honour) *in the eyes of the children of Iſrael*; *there-*

therefore ye ſhall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given. Let me add, that the Pſalmiſt's ſentiments of this whole affair ſeem to be with me, Pſal. cvi. 32, 33. *They angred him alſo at the waters of ſtrife, ſo that it went ill with Moſes for their ſakes: Becauſe they provoked his ſpirit, ſo that he ſpake unadviſedly with his lips.*

I ſuppoſe it will not be pretended, that Moſes poſſeſſed a miraculous power of bringing water out of this rock in a greater degree than when he did the like at Maſſah, Exod. xvii. the relation of which miracle will throw ſome light on this. Amongſt other things it is ſaid, v. 6. *Behold I will ſtand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb*, certainly, not as a ſpectator only, but to exert his own power.

3. In reply to the obſervation I made concerning the diſtance of which Paul was from Corinth, at the time when the ſuppoſed puniſhment was inflicted on the inceſtuous perſon, Pyrrho ſays, p. 62. "It is ſcarce needful to re-"ply, that what was done by Paul's order was "done by Paul, and that two miles and two "hundred make no difference in the caſe." But I ſtill think *that* circumſtance deſerves a little more attention. For, the queſtion is not ſo much who *iſſued* the order, as who *executed* it. Was the puniſhment inflicted by a power reſiding in the church of Corinth? No; Pyrrho ſays in this paragraph, "This was, perhaps, "above their power, and could be done only "by himſelf." Well then, was it inflicted by a power which Paul poſſeſſed? But what need then of an order to the church? And what

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ſort of a power muſt we conceive this of Paul's to be, which produced ſuch an effect at two hundred miles diſtance, and (for ought appears) at a time when Paul could not be conſcious of what was doing at Corinth? A marvellous power indeed? Or was it inflicted by the power of that ſpirit, who is ſupreme in power and preſent every where? This I ſuppoſe. But was the power of that ſpirit ſubjected to the direction and order of Paul? Where then is the parallel between this caſe, and the execution of the order of a ſuperior, or magiſtrate, by an inferior on earth? Is it to be ſuppoſed, that the ſupreme and omnipotent ſpirit would employ his power to execute an indiſcreet, wrong and criminal order of Paul's? No, ſure. If he did execute it, then, what are we to conclude concerning its *propriety* or *impropriety*.

4. I do indeed acknowledge freely, that had the apoſtles, under the influence of human weakneſs and paſſion, employed a miraculous power in inflicting bodily evils on any *indiſcreetly and improperly* (and this, as I take it, is Pyrrho's ſuppoſition) they would have been unjuſtifiable on chriſtian principles; but that they neither did, nor could, is what I have contended for, and ſtill appears to me the truth. Perhaps alſo I am as far as Pyrrho from aſcribing to the apoſtles abſolute and univerſal infallibility. All I contend for is, that in all caſes, where a miraculous power was exerted, they were ſubjected to a direction truly infallible, and which alone is ſo. I ſhall only add,

Laſtly, That Pyrrho is certainly right in referring us to the commiſſions and promiſes which our

our Lord delivered to his diſciples and apoſtles before his death and after his reſurrection, They will furniſh us with the beſt lights into the nature, purpoſes and extent of the gifts and powers conferred by him, or by the holy ſpirit, on his followers; or as he himſelf expreſſes it, *the ſigns that ſhould follow them that believe.* Now, I cannot but obſerve, that all of them are of the *gracious*, *merciful* and *beneficent* character; I find not the leaſt intimation either of *authority* or *power* to inflict temporal puniſhments, either on unbelievers or profeſſed chriſtians; and therefore it ſeems reaſonable to conclude, that no ſuch powers were deſigned for, or imparted to them, and that in all caſes where there was an appearance of ſuch infliction, it was by the operation of the hand of God, who employed the apoſtles only to give the ſignal and notification of it to others. Where extraordinary powers are granted of God, and the purpoſes ſpecified, it ſeems reaſonable to conclude, that the ſpecification limits the extent. As to the powers mentioned by our Saviour, I do not ſee how they could be perverted or abuſed, unleſs by conferring *benefits* on improper objects, or at wrong ſeaſons, or in an unfit manner; but nothing of this are they charged with, either in the goſpel hiſtory, or by Pyrrho.

I will not preſs on your indulgence any farther in relation to this ſubject, but thank you for what you have already ſhewn to

Your humble ſervant,

VIGILIUS.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

As you have been pleaſed to undertake the direction of a late publication, entitled, The Theological Repoſitory, *and I have profeſſed myſelf amongſt many others, a friend to this propoſed ſcheme, for promoting ſacred knowledge and literature, I ſhall, without any apology, venture another paper, if you think proper to aſſign it a place, in any of your future collections, to which I ſhall be always ready to contribute, as health and opportunity will permit.* Your's,

PHILELEUTHERUS VIGORNIENSIS.

A critical Inquiry into the Meaning of that Phraſe, the Form of God, *when applied to Jeſus Chriſt,* Philip. ii. 6, &c.

HOwever ſome have interpreted this paſſage of St. Paul, or I myſelf may have formerly heſitated about the ſenſe of it, it is now pretty evident to me, that the phraſe, εν μορφη Θεου, in the *form of God,* muſt refer to our ſaviour's *appearing* and *manner* of acting in *this world,* and not to any being or exiſtence that he has been thought to have had, *as God,* or *with God,* before his conception and birth of the Virgin.

Here are plainly two *different* and *diſtinct* beings ſpoken of; and we cannot ſuppoſe the apoſtle could mean, either that Jeſus Chriſt was the ſame *numerical* being with God himſelf, or that he was *another God,* poſſeſſed of the ſame nature

and eſſence, and of all ſimilar perfections. If ſo;—or if the *form of God* is thus to be interpreted, how was it poſſible that he ſhould empty, or diveſt himſelf of it? The nature of God being immutable, without any poſſibility of change or diminution. It may be ſaid of all other beings, that they are mutable, but not of true and proper *deity*.—And here, I think, Mr. *Peirce* has made a very juſt and pertinent obſervation, namely, "this expreſſion, the *form of God*," ſays he, "is not to be underſtood in the *metaphyſical* notion of a form; nor is, perhaps, ſuch kind of language ever to be met with concerning *any thing*, that it ſhould be ſaid to be in its *own form*: for the form being eſſential to every thing, it cannot be without it."

His meaning is, that the word *form* in this place ought to be taken, not in the *philoſophical*, but in its more uſual and popular ſenſe, as when one perſon is ſaid to bear reſemblance or likeneſs to another, either in office and ſtation, or in outward garb and appearance.* The word in

* Per formam Dei non puto Apoſtolum intelligere ipſam naturam divinam: Sicut *Ariſtoteles* in philoſophia ſua vocabulo μορφης intelligit naturam atque eſſentiam rei. Neque enim probabile eſt, Apoſtolum hac voce in ea ſignificatione uti quæ ſolis Philoſophis nota erat, populo vero ignota.—Præterea, ſi per formam Dei intelligit naturam divinam: conſequens eſt, ut pari ratione, verſu ſeq; per fornam ſervi intelligat naturam humanam: hoc enim poſtulat Antitheſis. At per formam ſervi non videtur intelligere naturam humanam; quippe quum Chriſtus naturam humanam non depoſuerit, nec unquam depoſiturus ſit. At formam ſervi per exaltationem ſui depoſuit. Apoſtolus igitur per formam ſervi non intelligit naturam ipſam humanam,

in common ſpeech conveys an idea of ſomething adventitious, extrinſick, and mutable. And this ſeems to be the conſtant uſe of the original word in the holy ſcriptures. It never ſignifies the *internal nature*, ſubſtance or eſſence of any perſon or thing, but only ſome outward viſible form or figure. So it is uſed, Mark xvi. 12. And it is thus uſed with its compounds and derivatives in many places of the Old and New Teſtament, as well as in other writers. [Dan. v. 6, 9, 10. Iſa. lxiv. 13. Matt. xvii. 2. Mark ix. 2. Rom. viii. 29. Philip. iii. 21.]— And ſo, in the text before us, when it is ſaid, that Jeſus was in the *form of God*, it cannot be underſtood to ſignify or intend any thing more than this, that the man Chriſt Jeſus bore a very great and *godlike character*, or was inveſted with powers more than human; that he was a very *extraordinary* perſon (as the word God ſignified among the Greeks) and that he acted like a god in exerting the miraculous gifts and powers which God had given him.

Nor is this a *ſingular* interpretation. Many of the beſt writers and commentators, have thus underſtood it. Per μορφην θεϑ intelligant *externam formam* qua Deo ſuiſſet ſimilis, *non ratione eſſentiæ, ſed operum & miraculorum diviniſſimorum. Sic in forma Dei erat, cum divina opera & miracula ſolo juſſu & nutu ſuo ederet, et ab hominibus eo nomine adoraretur*, μορφη enim *conditionem, ſpeciem* ſignificaret, non *eſſentiam*, conſentiunt *Gro-*

manam, ſed ſtatum ſeu conditionem ſervilem: et pari ratione per forman Dei non intelligit naturam ipſam divinam ſed ſtatum divinam, ſeu conditionem divinam, nempe gloriam ſeu majeſtatem divinam, &c. See further, *Piſcator* in loco.

tius et *Clericus*.—In a word, what *Joſephus*, the Jewiſh hiſtorian, ſays of Moſes, that "his *legiſlation* was ſuch as made this man to be thought *ſuperior to his own nature*,"* the ſame may be eminently ſaid of the man Chriſt Jeſus: All the wonderful works which were done by *him*, as well as by *Moſes*, *Elias*, and the other prophets, being done, not by their own power, but by the power of God, bearing teſtimony to their commiſſion, and ſupporting them in the execution of it. See Dr. *Lardner's Teſtimonies*, vol. i. p. 158.

Jeſus was a man of ſuperior dignity and pre-eminence to all that went before him, and he gave the moſt illuſtrious evidence and proof of it: This is undeniable. But the apoſtle, I am perſuaded, was far from meaning that Chriſt was eſſentially and truly God; only that he bore the ſymbolical appearance, the external marks or enſigns of deity. But theſe he laid aſide, or concealed, and made no ſhew of, when it is ſaid, as in the following verſe, that he took upon him the *form of a ſervant*. And here it is that the oppoſition or contraſt lies; as if the apoſtle had ſaid, Conſider this great and extraordinary perſon, *Chriſt Jeſus*, and let the *ſame mind*, the ſame diſpoſition and ſpirit, be in you that was in him. He humbled himſelf, and voluntarily condeſcended to act the part of a ſervant; and eſpecially when, in the cloſing ſcenes of his life and miniſtry, he entered upon a ſuffering ſtate,

* Upon this account Moſes is called *a god*; and others alſo, though of an inferior character, who have been called or appointed by God to act as his vicegerents are ſtiled gods. Ex. vii. 1. Pſ. lxxxii. 1, 6. John x. 34, 5.

and

and appeared in the character and likeneſs of a ſervant, μορφην δουλου λαβων, of a *vaſſal* or *bond ſlave*, as the word ſignifies. He then appeared as much in this form, as he had before, and at other times, appeared in the majeſty or likeneſs of a divine perſon; for the ſame term, μορφη, being applied to Chriſt in both verſes muſt have one and the ſame *ratio* or *analogy*. And therefore, if we ſuppoſe, as ſome have done, that the form of God in this place muſt intend or mean *God* himſelf, or one *co-equal* with him, this abſurdity or contradiction will follow, namely, that God and man, or rather God and a ſervant, or any inferior dependent being, muſt have the ſame nature, or the ſame undivided eſſence; it being one and the ſame perſon, even the man Chriſt Jeſus, who is here ſaid to ſuſtain theſe different characters: for, as I now ſaid, it is not the form of *God*, and the form of *man*, but the form of *God* and the form of a *ſervant* that ſtand here oppoſed to each other.

And from hence, I think, it will appear pretty evident, that the following phraſe, το ειναι ισα Θεω, here rendered to be equal with God, muſt be very improperly tranſlated; that the word, ισα, can import no more than *likeneſs*, not a ſtrict and proper *equality**. It it certain, however, that the word *form* is very ſtrong and expreſſive, and imports a viſible and ſtriking reſemblance

* Accordingly ſome have made this diſtinction, inter ισον ειναι θεω & ισα: *illud* parem eſſe Deo, *hoc* ſimili cultu & majeſtate: the meaning and uſe of which words has been happily illuſtrated by thoſe who are converſant with claſſical and profane writers.

in both caſes. Jeſus wore both the form of God, and the form of a ſervant; and his diſciples, and followers were all witneſſes to his appearing in theſe different characters of likeneſs, during his abode on earth. They beheld his glory as the ſon of God, or the only begotten, John i. 14. And they alſo beheld him as the ſon of man, or in the appearance and habit of a mean perſon, one of low rank and condition, poor and deſpiſed, humbled, abaſed and ill-treated, but behaving at all times with a true greatneſs and dignity, highly becoming his divine character and miſſion, and exhibiting to the world, in every view, the brighteſt example of piety and virtue, of a voluntary obedience, humility and ſelf-denial.

It ſhould always be obſerved, that what light or form ſoever he choſe to appear in, whether of glory or of ſelf-abaſement, in the ſplendor of his doctrine and miracles, or in the habit and dreſs of humble poverty, he is ſtill to be conſidered as one and the ſame *identical perſon*, even the promiſed Meſſiah, who when he came into the world bore the form of God, and the form of a ſervant, both as it was, indeed, expedient and neceſſary that he ſhould do, in order to prove his heavenly miſſion, to exhibit the moſt complete and perfect example, and to execute and fulfil with the greateſt honour and ſucceſs, that important errand upon which he came. It was, in a word, highly requiſite that Jeſus of Nazareth, ſhould appear and act, in every character, and upon all occaſions, as the *appointed, choſen* miniſter, of God, for the advantage and good of mankind.

To

To this end he bore the marks of deity in his mighty and beneficent works; and was made, at the ſame time, in the likeneſs of men, (ver. 7.) that is, capable of ſuffering like one of us, and herein ſetting us an example of perfect obedience and ſubmiſſion to the will of God. For the word, ομοιωματι, denotes a *real*, not an *imaginary* likeneſs, or a viſionary phantom, which was the idle dream of ſome in ancient times, called *Baſilidians*. Jeſus partook of fleſh and blood as we do, and had the ſame nature, as to *kind*, or the *true* and *real* likeneſs of man. So Adam is ſaid to have begotten a ſon, [κατα την ιδεαν αυτε, και κατα την εικονα αυτε] in his own ſpecific image or likeneſs, Gen. v. 3.—And Chriſt himſelf is ſaid, in the ſame ſenſe, to have been made like unto his brethren, that is, by a participation of the nature of Abraham, his great progenitor, and of his ſeed, Heb. ii. 14, 16, 17. And the ſcripture indeed does every where ſuppoſe, that he had all the eſſential conſtituent parts of man, a human ſoul or ſpirit, together with an animal and mortal body, as we have. And, excepting in the ſingular circumſtances of his conception and birth, he differed in nothing more from an ordinary common man, than in thoſe ſignal and extraordinary gifts that were conferred by God upon him. And here, indeed, he ſhone in the luſtre of deity; he appeared *like a god, in the brightneſs of his Father's glory*; or, as it is here ſaid, in the *form of God*, to which the adverb ισα, in the ſame verſe, very aptly correſponds. And, to this purpoſe our tranſlators have, in ſeveral places, thus rendered the *adjective*,

ισος, *like*, and not *equal*, Acts xi. 17. Phil. ii. 20. 2 Pet. i. 1. and ſome have made the ſame obſervation upon the uſe of this word in *Homer*, *Euripides*, and other Greek writers.* So that the two words, *form* and *likeneſs*, or the two phraſes, το ειναι ισα Θεω, and εν μορφη Θεου, ſeem very clearly and ſtrongly to expreſs one and the ſame thing. If, therefore, we can but hit upon the true ſenſe of that phraſe which intervenes, ουκ αρπαγμον ηγησατο, *he thought it not robbery*, the meaning of the apoſtle will, I think, be pretty clear and intelligible, as thus, "to *be*, or to be *thought* to be, equal with God, was what Jeſus, the ſon of God, never coveted, never ſought, or aimed at, during the whole courſe of his miniſtry on earth," &c. of which more hereafter. I will only obſerve, at preſent, that, as the word *robbery* has been generally thought to ſound ſomewhat harſh, ſo I make no doubt, but that it has greatly tended, as well as other miſtaken paſſages of ſcripture, to countenance and ſtrengthen that falſe and groundleſs notion which many have entertained of the *perſon* of Chriſt. They have too haſtily underſtood the text before us, as if *Jeſus* actually thought himſelf equal with God, or did not arrogate to himſelf too much in putting himſelf upon a level with God. Or *they* have really thought him al-

* Two paſſages have juſt occurred to me. Vid. Iſocrates orat. *ad Nicoclem*, p. 32. ισοθεα απαντας νομιζεσι τους εν ταις μοναρχιαις οντας, Diis ſimiles omnes eos cenſent, qui ſoli rerum potiuntur.—Ælian. Var. Hiſt. lib. 13. cap. 38. Alcibiades cum feliciter rem geſſiſſet, ισος θεοις, Diis ſimilis habebatur a populo.

together,

together, and in all reſpects *equal*, if not the *ſame* being or ſubſtance with him.

This has been the language of ſome. "He being eſſentially God, as he was the *ſon of God*, and ſo partook of the ſame nature with him, thought it not robbery, that is, *knew* that he did not wrongfully and unreaſonably aſſume to be equal with God, for he could not be ſaid to *uſurp* what he was originally and eſſentially poſſeſſed of."—Others have expreſſed themſelves thus; "He did not think it any ſinful preſumption to appear and act *as God*, ſince he was *united to the divine nature*, and was in this ſenſe *one with God*, though he did not overvalue or plume himſelf upon it, but did, on the contrary, as it here follows, humble himſelf," &c.

Thus many writers have concluded, in ſhort, that he *was God*, or had a being *with God*, before the formation of the world, or that he had, in ſome prior ſtate of exiſtence, been poſſeſſed of a majeſty and glory equal to that of the Father who ſent him, than which nothing can be conceived more abſurd in itſelf, or more injurious to the ſupreme honour and rights of deity. It was from this erroneous and miſtaken ſenſe of the words, that the late *Biſhop Sherlock*, in his ſermon upon this text (ſee vol. 4.) ſo ſtrongly pleads for *three* ſeveral ſtates and conditions which he ſuppoſes our ſaviour to have been in; one of them *prior*, and another *ſubſequent* to his appearance in this world; and from hence he would argue for his proper and ſtrict *equality*, or *ſpecific ſameneſs*, with the one God and Father of all; a notion which ſhocks and confounds all

all our ideas, as it gives up entirely the doctrine of the *Unity*, or of one God, and throws a thick miſt and darkneſs over the underſtanding. The original word, therefore, (as I now ſaid) muſt be wrong tranſlated; for to us, chriſtians, there is but one God, and the one true God can have no *equal*, no *rival*. The contrary aſſertion is monſtrous, incredible, and groundleſs, utterly repugnant to truth and reaſon, and to the whole ſcope and drift of the chriſtian revelation. The word *equality*, as well as *likeneſs*, always ſuppoſes or implies in it,—not a *ſameneſs* or *identity*, but a *diverſity* of perſons or objects, whether of two or more, conſidered and ſet in a *comparative* view; or it conveys to the mind a relative, and not a mere ſimple abſtract idea. And therefore, to uſe and apply the word *equal* as many modern chriſtians do, when they ſpeak of Jeſus, the ſon of God, as being very God, or of the ſame nature, ſubſtance or eſſence with the Father, and the like, is ſubverting the uſe and intent of all language, which is deſigned to ſhape and clothe our ideas properly, or ſo as to explain and communicate our thoughts and ſentiments to others with evidence and perſpicuity; but to ſpeak and argue, as ſome have done, is ſaying, in effect, no more than this, which is ſaying, indeed, juſt nothing at all; namely, that Jeſus Chriſt was equal to *himſelf*, or *rather* that his *likeneſs* to the Father who ſent him did neceſſarily deſtroy his true and proper *perſonality*; or, in other words, that two natures different and diſtinct as that of God and man, may in a *phyſical* ſenſe *unite*, or become

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ſo far the *ſame*, as to form and conſtitute one ſingle individual perſon, or being, which is manifeſtly *abſurd* and *unmeaning*, as well as *unſcriptural*, there being no foundation for the uſe of any ſuch language in the New Teſtament, nor are any ſuch ſentiments conveyed to us by the inſpired penmen of holy writ.

Chriſt is here ſaid to be in the *form* of God, it is true, but not *God himſelf:* nor does it follow, that he is *eqnal* or *like* to God, in original, eſſential glory and dignity. We can draw neither of theſe concluſions from this phraſe, the *form of God*; and it can never be interpreted ſo as to be underſtood in either ſenſe. The word muſt be very improperly applied to any ſpiritual being, or inviſible ſubſtance whatever. It always, or for the moſt part, denotes ſome *external* and *viſible* appearance;—and when ſpoken of *Jeſus Chriſt*, as here, I can underſtand by it only a *figurative* and *moral* reſemblance; as for inſtance, it is HE, the *man Chriſt Jeſus*, who has give to the world the moſt lovely and ſtriking repreſentation of the wiſdom, the power, the goodneſs and grace of the eternal Father, and has illuſtrated theſe divine perfections with glorious and convincing evidence, in his doctrine and miracles, in his life and miniſtry here on earth.—This was the *form of God* in which Jeſus appeared, though he did not aſſume to himſelf the *glory* of it, (aſcribing all to his God and Father, John v. 36. xiv. 10, 11.) nor affect to diſplay, with any appearance of pride and oſtentation, thoſe miraculous powers which God had given him. In other words, he was the viſible image

of

of God, as he declared, and made manifeſt to the world, the name, the council, and will of God, or his kind and gracious purpoſes in behalf of the human race. And herein he acted as the appointed meſſenger or miniſter of the eternal and inviſible God. This is the plain meaning of the evangeliſt. John i. 18. xvii. 26. *No man hath ſeen God at any time; the only begotten ſon, who is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

And to put, indeed, any other ſenſe upon this phraſe, the *form of God*, ſeems to me to be quite forced and unnatural. It is an affecting to be wiſe above what is written, and is oftentimes a ſpecies of ſecular worldly wiſdom, or pious craft.—It is, at beſt, ſpeaking of things too high, or ſearching into things too deep for us. And therefore to talk upon this head, with the dogmatical and deciſive air, and in the dark myſterious language of many divines, is *truly marvellous*. A little more modeſty and diffidence would better become the chriſtian *philoſopher* and *divine*. But to ſhift and play with unmeaning words in order to ſupport this, or the other favourite ſyſtem, is an unwarrantable and dangerous preſumption. It behoves *chriſtians* to talk like men, and not intrude into things they know nothing of, or ſpeak in terms to which they can affix no certain or clear ideas.

It is, upon the whole, very evident to me, that the word *form*, as it ſtands in this paſſage of St. Paul, muſt be entirely limited, and appropriate to that form, or likeneſs, in which our Saviour appeared when on earth, and not

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to any being or exiſtence which he may be ſuppoſed to have had in any ſtate previous to his appearance in this world, I can in no wiſe conceive, that he who is ſaid to have been God, or with God, in a prior ſtate, or that even any *angelic* being could actually become a *true* and *real man*, and dwell amongſt us, as one of our own *ſpecies*. Nor is it leſs difficult to conceive that a man, as Jeſus was, ſhould in any ſuppoſed ſtate or condition be equal with God, either whilſt here on earth, or in his ſubſequent ſtate of honour and advancement in heaven. This is what we can never reconcile with any juſt or conſiſtent notions of his true and proper *humanity*. Jeſus Chriſt, the promiſed Meſſiah, was, when in this world, a man like one of us. And he is ſtill a man in his exalted ſtate, now glorified as Lord and head of the whole creation, though he was once abaſed, vilified, and brought low, through the injury and abuſe which he received from the hands of wicked and unreaſonable men.

How abſurd then is the notion of his ſuppoſed equality with God, and indeed all thoſe other contradictory opinions which are involved in it, or neceſſarily flow from it? The ſcripture, I am perſuaded, is far, very far, from leading us into unintelligible myſteries, or into any ſuch fooliſh abſurdities as many perſons, even at this day, are too ready to ſwallow and embrace. The true rational chriſtian, or one that rightly underſtands the goſpel of Chriſt, is not one that believes and worſhips two gods, or three gods; this is IDOLATRY: He cannot ſay that one being

being or ſubſtance is two, or that two or three are no more than one; this is profound unintelligible MYSTERY: He dares not aſſert, that a man, one like himſelf, is equal with God; this is BLASPHEMY: But he is one who believes and acknowledges the man Chriſt Jeſus to be the ſon of God, or the promiſed Meſſiah; this is true *ſcripture divinity*. In a word, he is not for making more gods than one; nor for leſſening or degrading the peerleſs majeſty of the one living and true God. This, I take it, is agreeable to the ſenſe of our Saviour and his apoſtles; and the plain ſimple doctrine of the New Teſtament. It is, at leaſt, the moſt rational and conſiſtent notion that I can form upon the ſubject of this enquiry at preſent, however it may differ from the opinion and ſentiments of many, who have been commonly reputed the moſt *orthodox*.

[*To be concluded in the next number.*]

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

AS you have been ſo obliging as to inſert in your uſeful Repoſitory, ſeveral doubts and queries that I have already ſent you, I flatter myſelf that you will give me the ſame indulgence with reſpect to the following obſervations on the reaſoning of St. Paul in his epiſtle to the Romans, v. 12—14.

In

In this part of the epiſtle the apoſtle is drawing a compariſon between the effects of the ſin of Adam and of the obedience of Chriſt, and is endeavouring to demonſtrate, that the benefits reſulting to mankind from the latter exceed the injury they received from the former. Concerning the ſin of Adam he ſays, that it occaſioned the death of many; and to prove this, he obſerves, that, in the interval between Adam and Moſes, as there was no law, there could be no tranſgreſſion; ſo that thoſe who died in that period muſt have ſuffered on account of ſins not committed by themſelves, but by their anceſtors. The whole paſſage that I propoſe to animadvert upon is the following.

Rom. v. 12. *&c. Wherefore as by one man ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin; and ſo death paſſed upon all men; for that all have ſinned. For until* (or before) *the law ſin was in the world; but ſin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheleſs death reigned from Adam to Moſes, even over them that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion, who is the figure of him that was to come.*

Before I make any remark upon this paſſage, I ſhall take the liberty to propoſe a conjectural emendation of our preſent reading of part of it, in order to make the author more conſiſtent with himſelf. His argument evidently requires, that thoſe who died in the interval between Adam and Moſes, ſhould not be conſidered as ſinners; and yet, as we render it, the 12th verſe concludes with ſaying expreſsly, that they all had ſinned; which ill agrees with what he ſays after-

afterwards, that ſin could not be imputed in their circumſtances. I therefore ſuppoſe that, inſtead of εφ'ω, or επι ω, πανλες ημαρλον, the apoſtle wrote επει ϗ πανλες ημαρλον, *for all have not ſinned*; and then what follows, about there being no law between Adam and Moſes, will have an evident propriety, as calculated to ſupport that aſſertion, on which the whole of his argument turns.

If this conjecture be not admitted, the clauſe, as it now ſtands, muſt be conſidered as the language of an objector, who, to exclude the cauſality of the ſin of Adam in the mortality of his deſcendants, ſhould ſay, that men die in conſequence of their own ſins. In this caſe the obſervation that follows muſt be conſidered as an anſwer to the objection, and will then have the ſame propriety as if it had been intended to ſupport the contrary aſſertion.

With or without the propoſed emendation, I would take the liberty to make the following remarks upon the paſſage.

1. In what ſenſe is it true, that there was no law between Adam and Moſes? Have not mankind been at all times in a ſtate of moral obligation, capable of being rewarded or puniſhed for their conduct?

2. If it be replied, that they were not always under a law to which death was annexed as a penalty, and therefore could not ſin *after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion*, in which ſenſe I believe the generality of our modern commentators underſtand St. Paul; I aſk, how did men ſin after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion

under

under the law of Moſes? I apprehend that the ſanctions of the law given to Adam, and of that given by Moſes, were very different, though the term *death* do occur in them both. For with reſpect to Adam, it appears by the conſequences, that the death with which he was threatened did not, as in the law of Moſes, mean a preſent deprivation of life; but only, in general, the being ſubject to death, or the *mortality* of himſelf and his deſcendants. The law of Moſes, in this reſpect, reſembled other civil laws, in which death is inflicted for the commiſſion of particular heinous crimes. It can hardly be ſuppoſed (which yet muſt be admitted, upon the ſuppoſition that mortality or immortality were the ſanctions of the law of Moſes) that if it had been poſſible for a perſon, under that conſtitution, to have lived without ſin, he would have been exempted from death, any more than infants, who certainly died among them, notwithſtanding they were incapable of ſinning.

But, indeed, this interpretation, though it have the ſanction of ſome celebrated names, appears to me to be loaded with ſo many abſurdities, that I cannot poſſibly ſuppoſe it to be agreeable to the real ſenſe of the writer, and therefore I ſhall animadvert no farther upon it. It is, however, upon this ſtrange hypotheſis that Dr. Taylor, in the true ſpirit of a commentator, paſſes the following compliment on the reaſoning of the verſes I have quoted: "Sure never was "there a greater variety of uſeful ſentiments "crowded into a ſmaller compaſs; and yet ſo

"ſkilfully, that one part very clearly explains "another." (Preface to his paraphraſe on the Romans, p. 146.) And afterwards, "One ſhall "not find, in any other author, an argument ſo "juſtly managed, ſo fully eſtabliſhed, attended "with ſuch a variety of inſtructive ſentiments, "in the compaſs of *thirty words*, for, ſetting "aſide the articles, there are no more in the "Greek."

That the mortality of the human race took place in conſequence of the ſin of Adam, I have no doubt. We have the authority of Moſes for it; but how this is made more evident from any conſideration of the mortality of thoſe who died in the interval between Adam and Moſes, I own I do not ſee. Might not St. Paul as well have alledged the mortality of thoſe who never heard of the law of Moſes, or who were not ſubject to it? But theſe he elſewhere acknowledges to have been under a law.

Upon the whole, the paſſage I have animadverted upon appears to me to bear the marks of haſte and inadvertence; but I ſhall ſuſpend my judgment till I hear from ſome of your learned correſpondents.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your very humble ſervant,

PAULINUS.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

Some Thoughts on praying in the Name of Chriſt, *occaſioned by an Eſſay on that Subject in* No. V.

I Entirely agree with the ingenious Eſſayiſt, that it is highly proper, for chriſtian worſhippers, to have a clear and diſtinct idea of what they would expreſs by praying *in the name of Chriſt*; that their addreſſing God, under this particular form, may ſo far be a reaſonable, intelligent and edifying ſervice. But, if *in the name of Chriſt* ſignifies *for the honour of our advocate and mediator Jeſus Chriſt*, or, *through the merits of Jeſus Chriſt our ſaviour*, or, *for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake*, ſhould we not naturally expect, that the *form* would have been uſed repeatedly, without any ambiguity? God, who gave them *the comforter, the ſpirit of truth*, to teach them *all* things, could not, certainly, have omitted *any* thing, which was *highly proper*, which was neceſſary for them to know. However, if the ſenſe of the foregoing expreſſions is, notwithſtanding, demonſtrably implied in the words, *in the name of Chriſt*, we can only ſay, that we are left in the dark concerning a matter of great importance.

But, this gentleman will ſurely allow, if contradictions can be found in the ſcriptures, that the ſentiments on one ſide of the queſtion only could have been dictated by the ſpirit of God. Therefore, I was almoſt going to ſay, he ought to allow, that no expreſſions can be found in the ſcriptures, equivalent to theſe *through the merits of Chriſt, for Chriſt's ſake, &c.* or, if ſuch

can be found, that they muſt be the unwarrantable productions of fallible men. For, we there read, 'God ſo loved the world, that he gave his 'only begotten ſon, that whoever believeth in 'him, might not periſh, but have everlaſting 'life—Eternal life is the *free gift* of God. 'Every good and perfect gift deſcendeth from 'the Father of lights, with whom is no vari-'ableneſs, neither ſhadow of turning.—Of his 'own will, begat he us with the word of truth. 'All things are of God, who hath reconciled 'us to himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt—God was in 'Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf—'Behold, what manner of love the Father hath 'beſtowed upon us—Love is of God—God 'loved us—God is love,' &c. Theſe characteriſtics of the Deity, are clear and intelligible to every capacity, as well as congenial to the original unbiaſſed ſentiments of the human mind. But, hence, are we not emphatically taught, that, as God is the only fountain of love, whoſe ſtreams refreſh the boundleſs univerſe, the interceſſion of no other being whatever can enlarge his love, and that, as eternal life is the *free gift* of God, *no* equivalent, in whole or in part, could have been given or received for it, and, conſequently, that to pray to God, *for Chriſt's ſake*, or, *through the merits of Chriſt*, can be no part of chriſtian worſhip.

Farther; either the phraſe in queſtion was or was not underſtood by the Jews in general, in the times of the apoſtles. If they underſtood it, the ſenſe of it is manifeſt from the high prieſt's reprimand to the apoſtles before the council,

Acts

Acts v. 27, 32. and the apoſtles reply: *The high prieſt aſked them ſaying, Did we not ſtraitly command you, that ye ſhould not teach* in this name? *and behold ye have filled Jeruſalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apoſtles anſwered and ſaid, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raiſed up Jeſus, whom ye ſlew and hanged upon a tree; him hath God exalted with his right-hand to be a prince and a ſaviour, for to give repentance to Iſrael, and remiſſion of ſins; and we are his witneſſes of theſe things; and ſo is alſo the holy ſpirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him.* But, ſhould this declaration of the apoſtles be deemed inſufficient, to aſcertain the true meaning of *teaching*, and, conſequently, of *praying* in the name of Chriſt, may we not expect a full anſwer to all our enquiries upon this ſubject, in the principal paſſages of ſcripture, which declare thoſe qualifications that render our prayers acceptable to God? We read, then, *God heareth not ſinners.—The fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.—Ye aſk and receive not, becauſe ye aſk amiſs.—Whatever we aſk, we receive of him, becauſe we keep his commandments, and do thoſe things that are pleaſing in his ſight.—And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we aſk any thing according to his will, he heareth us.* In other words, If we pray to God as the diſciples of Chriſt, aſking only for ſuch things as he hath declared, and his inſcrutable wiſdom knoweth to be conducive to our happineſs, while we purpoſe and endeavour, as the goſpel requireth, to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and piouſly

the preſent world, we ſhall obtain all our requeſts; but rely, as we will, on *the merits, ſatisfaction*, or *prevailing efficacy* of *Chriſt's interceſſion for us*, if we live in the practice of unrighteouſneſs we have no grounds of acceptance.

All theſe things conſidered, that God is the only fountain of love, that this is his eſſential and eternally unchangeable characteriſtic, and that he is always acceſſible to returning penitents, would it not now appear, that by praying *in the name of Chriſt*, nothing more can be underſtood in general, than praying *by his authority, according to his directions, as his diſciples*, or *as thoſe who belong to him*,* and hope for the divine mercy, only according to thoſe terms of obedience laid down in his goſpel, or by walking *even as he walked?* To this purpoſe, the apoſtle ſays, 'If any man be *in Chriſt*, he is a 'new creature; old things are paſſed away, be'hold all things are become new.' To the ſame purpoſe, we are exhorted Eph. iv. 32. *to forgive one another, as God* in Chriſt, εν χριστω, *hath forgiven us*. If we pray not as *new creatures*, then, or as thoſe who purpoſe and endeavour to be ſuch, our prayers can be attended with no ſucceſs; and, *vice verſa*.

Chriſt, indeed, is ſtiled our propitiatory, mediator, high prieſt, advocate and intereeſſor with the Father. But, are we ever, notwith-

* See Mat. xviii. 5, 20. Mark ix. 41. Acts ii. 38. xix. 5. Eph. v. 20. Phil. ii. 10. Col. iii. 17. 1 Cor. i. 13. v. 4, &c. In theſe paſſages, where the name of Chriſt ſignifies his power, juriſdiction or authority, we ſhould always remember whence he derived this power, &c.

ſtanding

ſtanding, expreſsly commanded to addreſs God through *him* under theſe characters? Or, granting this, what more can be underſtood here, than addreſſing God, as his followers, who believe that God has raiſed him from the dead, and, conſequently, that he was the *authorized* meſſenger of God, and appointed to be the diſtributor of his favours to mankind. That we are required to believe nothing more concerning Chriſt is evident, ſince, *If thou confeſs with thy mouth the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and believeſt in thy heart that God has raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved.* But, if any thing farther be meant, when Chriſt is called our *high prieſt, advocate,* &c. than that he is the diſtributor of God's favours to mankind, may it not be only implied that his ſupplicating for *thoſe favours,* is made a condition of his having the perpetual *diſtribution* of them? The character which he now ſuſtains, as *ſitting at the right hand of God,* and preſiding under God over the affairs of all the children of men, is certainly the moſt exalted that we can conceive of any creature, being thus the *image,* even the *repreſentative* of God, in the diſplay of his moſt honourable and adorable perfections. But, may not, *Aſk, and thou ſhalt receive,* be a law to the moſt exalted creature in the univerſe, as a conſtant teſtimony of his dependence upon the ſupreme unrivalled Majeſty of all worlds; and, though God is pleaſed then, to employ a mediator in communicating all ſpiritual bleſſings to us, have we hence *any* foundation for transferring the *glory* of original ſelf-exiſting benevolence to the

illuſtrious inſtrument through whom it is diffuſed? All our temporal bleſſings are conveyed to us, through ſome medium or other. But, we never talk of *the merits* of the earth, or air, or ſun, or rain, or dews, &c. This, however, is a language equally juſtifiable with that of *the merits of Chriſt*, when introduced in repugnancy to the ſupreme univerſal goodneſs of God.

Even allowing, then, that "preſenting our "addreſs to God through him, as high prieſt, "mediator and interceſſor, or advocate, is not "only the principal, but the very identical "thing that our Saviour intends in thoſe places "of St. John, where he ſpeaks to his diſciples "of aſking *in his name*," it is clear, notwithſtanding, that by the *mediation*, &c. we are not to underſtand any *prevailing efficacy in Chriſt*, in contradiction to, or originally influencing, the everlaſting good pleaſure of the Father of all. But, how does it appear, that preſenting our addreſſes to God, through Chriſt, as high prieſt, &c. is the very identical thing that our Saviour intended in the places referred to here? This ſeems, at leaſt, not to be the thing intended in John xiv. 12—14. Our Saviour ſays, ver. 12. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that believeth in me, the works that I do ſhall he do alſo, and greater works than theſe ſhall he do; becauſe I go unto my Father.* 13. *And whatſoever ye ſhall aſk* in my name, *that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the ſon.* 14. *If ye ſhall aſk any thing* in my name, *I will do it.* The obvious meaning conveyed by the words, *in my name*, in this paſſage, ſeparately conſidered, is the very

ſame

ſame that is conveyed by the words, *he that believeth in me.*

The only text, on which our author grounds his notion of *praying in the name of Chriſt*, is John xvi. 26. *But the comforter, the Holy Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend* in my name, *he ſhall teach you all things.* "Here, now," ſays he, "we have a moſt clear and ſtrong inſtance of doing a thing in the name of another, and particularly in the name of Chriſt, which cannot be reduced to any one of the heads before mentioned. For, as giving the Holy Ghoſt was his Father's own act and deed; ſo, when he ſent that Comforter in the name of Chriſt, he could with no ſort of propriety be ſaid, to do it *by his authority*, according to *his directions*, and as *his diſciple*, or as belonging to him under any ſuch inferior character." Upon this I would remark, how can that, which was the Father's own act and deed, with any propriety be ſaid to be the ſole effect of another's *merits*, or nothing more than a full equivalent for the price he paid? A perſon's own act and deed, muſt be his own *voluntary* act and deed, muſt derive its origin as well as its accompliſhment entirely from *himſelf*. But, letting this paſs; how does it appear that the 26th verſe muſt neceſſarily refer to the 16th? Certainly, ſuch a connection is not univerſally characteriſtical of the ſacred writings. Allowing, however, that the ſaid reference takes place here, what follows from it?—That it was a part of Chriſt's mediatorial office, to pray the Father for the Comforter; not that the Father was gained over by his merits only to give the Comforter.

Not

Not to mention many other texts to this purpoſe, ſee 1 Sam. vii. 9, 10. Our author will not, I dare ſay, aſcribe any ſuch merit to Samuel, as he contends for upon the preſent occaſion. But, without reſting the matter here, why is it taken for granted, that the words *in my name*, are incontrovertibly applicable to the miſſion of the Spirit by the Father? May they not refer to the qualifications of the diſciples only, and the whole verſe be explained thus:—"The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will ſend *to thoſe who are* in my name (τοις ουσι, underſtood) or, to you becauſe you belong to me, or are my faithful and obedient ſervants, he ſhall teach you all things." In this manner, at leaſt, we muſt explain Mark ix. 41.* "Whoſoever ſhall give you a cup of water to drink, *in my name, becauſe you belong to Chriſt*, ſhall not loſe his reward." The conſtruction is not, Whoſoever, *in my name, through my interceſſion*, ſhall give you a cup of water to drink—but, Whoſoever ſhall give you, *in my name, as my diſciples*, or, *becauſe you belong to me*, a cup of cold water to drink, ſhall not loſe his reward. Thus, alſo, we may explain the words in John xiv. 13, 14, 16, 23. *In my name* in the 13th and 14th verſes, is obviouſly ſynonimous with, *he that believeth in me*, in the 12th verſe. But, to this interpretation of the paſſage in diſpute, and to obviate an argument drawn from John xvi. 24. it is objected, "To ſuppoſe that they, *the Twelve*, had never prayed at that time, *before his death*, as his,

* See alſo Mat. x. 42. xviii. 5.

Chriſt's

Chriſt's diſciples, or, *according to his directions*, formerly given them at their own requeſt, is a ſuppoſition hard to be maintained, &c." Why ſo? In that form of prayer which he taught them, they were not directed to pray as *his diſciples*. But ſuppoſing that they uſed that or any other form, as *his diſciples* or *followers*, according to the apprehenſions they then entertained of him, they could not, notwithſtanding, before his reſurrection, have, in reality, prayed to the Father as his diſciples, as the ſubjects of his proper kingdom; for until the reſurrection, and even for ſome time after, their thoughts were wholly fixed upon a temporal kingdom, and they conſidered him only as a temporal prince. But, his kingdom was not of this world.

I ſhall ſay no more at preſent, but expreſs my wiſhes, that our modern divines may be no longer influenced or directed by the doctrine of Plato, in explaining or enforcing the doctrines of the New Teſtament. Jeſus Chriſt ſpake as never man ſpake, and he is the way to eternal life. I am, Gentlemen,

Your humble ſervant,

PHILALETHES.

P. S. Some other thoughts occurred to me upon this ſubject, which, not to make the article too long, I have avoided mentioning, until I ſee the fate of the arguments already advanced.

The

The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteouſneſs and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt. PAUL.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

IT has for ſome time been a doubt with me (nor am I ſingular in doubting) whether the ſacrament of the Lord's Supper, as we call it, was only a temporary and local inſtitution, or intended for a ſtanding rite in the chriſtian church through all ages; and I hope I ſhall not be blamed for expreſſing my doubts upon this ſubject; eſpecially ſince I propoſe them only with a view of having them examined and ſolved by ſome of your correſpondents.

Doubting in a caſe where ſatisfactory evidence is wanting, I think, all unprejudiced perſons will allow, is no more a vice of the mind than aſſent is a virtue, where the evidence is clear and demonſtrative; and what is not vicious cannot be blame-worthy.

I am not ignorant, indeed, that the general opinion of chriſtians, in all ages of the church, has been in favour of the perpetuity of that inſtitution; and many, I doubt not, will think it ſtrange that any one, who profeſſeth himſelf a chriſtian, ſhould make a diſpute of it.

But general opinion is not the rule in matters of pure revelation. It is to the law and to the teſtimony we are to have recourſe; and if that be in our favour, it matters not what any man,

man, or any number of men have ſaid or thought to the contrary.

In inſtitutions of a poſitive kind (ſuch as have no foundation in the reaſon and nature of things) we muſt have recourſe to the mind of the inſtitutor, and his mind and intention can only be known by the words he has made uſe of in that inſtitution.

To bring home this general obſervation to the particular caſe before us, the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper is confeſſedly a poſitive inſtitution, ordained by Jeſus Chriſt before he left this world; and from his ſacred and divine character it is unqueſtionably to be concluded, that he delivered his mind upon this ſubject, fairly and without reſerve, both as to the nature, the end and the continuance of it.

Had it been our Lord's deſign that this ordinance of his ſhould be a perpetual ſtanding rite, indiſpenſable to all his diſciples, is it not natural to conclude, that this deſign of his would have been as clearly and fully ſignified as words could expreſs it.

We find the caſe ſtands thus with reſpect to all poſitive inſtitutions, under the law of Moſes, which were to remain in force among the Jews, ſo long as they continued a nation diſtinct from the reſt of the world. This is ſo well known, that it needs no proof from particular inſtances.

And would not the great teacher of Iſrael have uſed the like punctuality and preciſion with reſpect to this ordinance of his, had he intended it to be of perpetual and indiſpenſable obligation? Doubtleſs he would; for, otherwiſe,

wiſe, he hath not ſhown the equity and fairneſs of an ordinary human lawgiver; a thought which every chriſtian mind will reject with indignation.

Now, whether Jeſus Chriſt hath given any intimation of his deſigning this poſitive rite to be of interminable obſervation, let his own words (and they are very plain ones) be judge.

The paſſages in the goſpel, where mention is made of this religious rite, you know, are but three, viz. Matt. xxvi. 26—28. Mark xiv. 22—24. Luke xxii. 19—20. and what is our Lord repreſented as ſaying by theſe three hiſtorians? Why, no more than this, "Take, eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of me." Now, here is no mention made, either as to univerſality or perpetuity of that religious rite; or, in other words, Jeſus Chriſt here gives no orders to his apoſtles to charge thoſe of other nations (who ſhould believe on him through their words) either to make uſe of this rite, as an eſſential part of his religion, or to hand it down in practice from one generation to another unto the end of time.

And, therefore, if the apoſtles did give any ſuch charge to thoſe they converted to the faith of Chriſt, they muſt have done it without any commiſſion, that we know of, from their divine maſter; conſequently, all at this day, who join in this religious rite, however innocently, conſcientiouſly or profitably (as they imagine) they may perform it; yet do they not obſerve it without a divine warrant? For, if eating bread, &c. in remembrance of Chriſt, be neither a

branch

branch of natural religion (as it plainly is not) nor yet a command of Jeſus Chriſt, reaching to all his followers; where, then, is the ground of a chriſtian's obligation to it? With as much reaſon might all Chriſt's diſciples, in every church, own themſelves obliged to waſh one another's feet, becauſe our Saviour waſhed his apoſtles' feet, and gave it in charge to do as he had done to them, John xiii. 14, 15.

Well; but did not our Lord ſay, Do this, *i. e.* eat and drink, in remembrance of me? He did: but to whom? Why, only to them who ſat at meat with him; and, I pray, by what mood or figure in logic, can we infer an univerſal obligation from a particular command, or, a command to a few particular perſons?

If God had commanded Abraham only to circumciſe himſelf and his houſehold, without adding any more; would all his poſterity, ever after, have thought themſelves obliged to have that painful rite performed upon their children? and the ſame may be ſaid with regard to the paſſover.

The fartheſt, then, that our Lord's command to the Eleven can reaſonably be extended (as far as I can perceive) is only to ſuch as were in like circumſtances with them, *i. e.* their chriſtian brethren of the Jewiſh nation and in the land of Judea; and that only to the deſtruction of Jeruſalem; for this their eating and drinking, was only an appendix to the paſſover; which paſſover muſt ceaſe of courſe, when the temple was deſtroyed, becauſe it was not to be celebrated any where elſe, by an expreſs conſtitution

tion in Moſes' law. And, conſequently, that which was annexed to it, or rather, the concluding part of it (which was by Jeſus Chriſt, applied to a different purpoſe from which it had been applied to before) muſt ceaſe of courſe unleſs there was (as I do not find there is) an expreſs law to the contrary.—And how eaſy was it for Jeſus Chriſt to have given ſuch a command? If, therefore, the ſon of God has given no ſuch expreſs command (and whether he has not is referred to the judgment of others) their not doing of it muſt be aſcribed either to an overſight in him (a ſuppoſition not to be admitted) or elſe he muſt have omitted it deſignedly and on purpoſe; and then the conſequence will follow, that eating and drinking in remembrance of Chriſt, was only a temporary and local inſtitution, appointed till the time of reformation; until the period of that great revolution ſhould come, when the whole œconomy of the Jewiſh religion, with all its ritual obſervances, was to be utterly aboliſhed; and the true worſhippers ſhould worſhip the Father in ſpirit and in truth.

But what ſays St. Paul upon the ſubject before us; for, it is but fair and reaſonable that his words ſhould be conſidered? The very ſame, as to the ſubſtance of it, that Jeſus Chriſt himſelf ſaid, and no more, as may be ſeen by looking into 1 Cor. xi. 23—25. only he adds, as his own obſervation on our Saviour's words to the Twelve upon that occaſion, v. 26. *For as often as ye eat of this bread, &c. ye do ſhow forth the Lord's death until he come.* Now here

here is plainly no injunction, no command as to the thing itſelf.—He leaves them at liberty either to do it or not, only directing them, as often as they performed that rite, to do it in remembrance of a crucified Saviour. So that, for any thing St. Paul has ſaid to the contrary, the matter ſtands juſt where Jeſus Chriſt had left it.

And from what our Lord delivered upon that occaſion I beg leave to obſerve, that unleſs Gentile chriſtians are obliged (which they cannot be) to keep the Jewiſh paſſover, no reaſon can be aſſigned from Chriſt's inſtitution, why this rite of eating, &c. in remembrance of him, ſhould be kept up: ſince it was only an appendage to, or, rather, an eſſential part (in our Saviour's time) of the paſchal ſolemnity, transferred by his direction to another uſe.

But (it will be aſked) did not all chriſtian churches, out of Judea, in the apoſtle's days, meet together to eat, &c. in remembrance of Chriſt? I do not know that; the ſcripture ſays no ſuch thing. Well; but did not the Corinthians then? They did; but who commanded them? St. Paul, you will ſay. St. Paul, as was obſerved, doth not ſay he did; and therefore nobody ought to ſay it for him.

But do not we read, Acts xx. 11. that St. Paul adminiſtered the ſacrament to the elders from Epheſus before he left Miletus? The apoſtle's words are, *When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread and had eaten*, &c. but theſe words will not prove the point for which they are alledged, as is plain from Acts xxvii. 33—35. *And, while the day was*

coming on, Paul beſought them all to take meat, ſaying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have taken nothing; wherefore I pray you to take ſome meat, for this is for your health;—and when he had thus ſpoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in the preſence of them all, and when he had broken it he began to eat.

But how came the apoſtles to ſuffer ſuch an innovation (if it was one) under their own eyes? Anſwer, How could they help it? For the prejudices of their Gentile converts were ſo ſtrong in behalf of ſacrifical rites, or eating and drinking in honour of the objects of their former worſhip, that they could not be content with the ſpiritual ſacrifices required by the goſpel, but muſt have ſomething material to offer—and hence the apoſtles were, in a manner, compelled to yield to a practice, which (though it was not blame-worthy for the matter of it, yet) had no foundation in the original appointment of Jeſus Chriſt.

This is all I have to ſay at preſent, except that I am, Gentlemen,

Very much your humble ſervant,

Oct. 13, 1769. J. B.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

WHETHER the following obſervations on the conduct of Judas are any way *original* I cannot ſay. The argument ariſing from the view of it in favour of chriſtianity is *new* and *ſingular* to *me*. It is ſo obvious, that I can ſcarcely think it has eſcaped the notice of others. If the obſervations are of ſuch a nature, or placed in ſuch a light, as to be worth reading, they are at your ſervice. If the remarks have not been purſued after the uſual method of argumentation, let this plead for me; they are word for word as they were delivered from the pulpit to a plain congregation, in the application of a ſermon which I preached, a ſhort time ſince, on the character, conduct, and repentance of Judas. I endeavoured that the obſervations ſhould be quite evident in their nature and intention to the meaneſt of my hearers, who could not take in arguments logically and abſtractedly purſued.

— B.

CHRISTIANITY is a religion built on and ſupported by *facts* open and indubitable, perceived and acknowledged facts. Its diſcoveries are not the wild chimæras of a diſtempered and viſionary brain, but intereſting and well-grounded events of a wiſe and gracious Providence. *That*, which ſo many honeſt and *diſintereſted* perſons, about 1700 years ago, defended on *perſonal* evidence with ſuch undaunted bravery; *that*, to the intereſts of which they cheerfully devoted

every temporal emolument and gratification; *that*, which the cruelest inflictions of the most cruel torments that art could deviſe or malice execute; which all the horrid apparatus of martyrdom could not affright them from defending, publiſhing and glorying in; *that*, I ſay, could not be the dream of credulity and enthuſiaſm; could not be the offspring of fraud and impoſture, but a *fact* as well grounded in its revelation as it is excellent in its nature, gracious in its deſigns, pure in its tendency, and glorious in its end.

The arguments which ariſe from a view of the *characters* and *conduct* of the firſt preachers of the goſpel, have been often placed in a moſt happy and advantageous light, and can hardly fail of leaving ſome impreſſions of the truth of what they preached, on the mind that is not totally *blinded* by ſceptical prejudices, and *hardened* by vicious propenſities and gratifications.

The evidences that reſult from impartial *obſervations on the converſion and apoſtleſhip of St. Paul*, in favour of the religion he was miraculouſly led to contend for, are exceedingly cogent; evidences on which, for their peculiar force and luſtre, ſome learned and penetrating men, have even dared to reſt the whole cauſe of chriſtianity. I have often thought the conduct of Judas Iſcariot, though to appearance almoſt unaccountable, yet when entered impartially into, affords us ſome very ſtriking evidences, not to ſay indiſputable proofs, of the divinity of Chriſt's miſſion. I apprehend if they are placed in the following *plain* and familiar light,

light, they will appear to carry in them much force and rational conviction.

If Chriſt had been an impoſtor, Judas *muſt* have known it, having *been* ſo long with him to *obſerve* his *conduct*—to *ſee* his *miracles*—to hear his *words*; having had all the *opportunities* imaginable, both of a public and private nature, to find out the true *character* of Chriſt, and the real ends of his miniſtry. Now if Chriſt had *not* been what he profeſſed to be, Judas might very lawfully have *detected* him—I ſay, if Jeſus had been an impoſtor he might, with all the reaſon of juſtice in the world, have taken away the veil, and opened the deceit to the view of mankind. If he had done ſo—if he had betrayed and expoſed him in caſe of impoſture, he would not have given himſelf much trouble and concern about it afterwards; for in that caſe he would have done nothing but what was fit and right; and inſtead of being under the contracted influence of perſonal attachment, would have evidenced his generoſity to mankind, by opening their eyes, and taking off the maſk of hypocriſy; much leſs would the thought of his having betrayed ſo *very great* an impoſtor (as Chriſt muſt have been, had he been an impoſtor at all) have driven him to abſolute *deſpair*, and that black, unſufferable deſpair of ſoul, on account of what he had done in betraying his maſter, to *ſelf-murder*.

But all the proceedings of Judas againſt Chriſt, and againſt himſelf in conſequence thereof, may be accounted for upon this principle, and can-

not be accounted for but upon *this* principle, "that Jeſus was really ſent of God, and that "Judas had ſufficient conviction and undeniable "evidence of it."

See, then, in the conduct of this arch traitor, and ingrate, the admirable footſteps of Divine Providence! How remarkably and viſibly did the deſigns of that God who, by his eternal power and wiſdom, "educes good from ill," over-rule and direct the policy of Satan, the covetouſneſs of Judas, and the malice of prieſts and elders! The ends of Satan's inſtigation (Luke xxii. 3.) and the concurring artifices and attempts of his agents of the temple were, doubtleſs ſuch as theſe, "If one of Jeſus's own "choſen, and one who has been ſo long with "him, and ſo long borne atteſtation to his "meſſiahſhip, renounces and betrays him to his "enemies, it will diſcredit his cauſe in the face "of the world more than any thing beſides."

And, indeed, what would have ſounded more to the diſcredit of the chriſtian religion, than ſuch a report as this, founded on one part of the traitor's conduct.——"There! the cheat is at length diſcovered; diſcovered, not by a profeſſed enemy; not by a new convert or raw inquirer; not by one liable to be *miſtaken* in the matter, but by one of the grand abettors of the Nazaræan cauſe; by an experienced and acute veteran; by one who *pretended*, like the reſt of the fraternity, to miracles and extraordinary powers of inſpiration, &c. Such an one, by name Judas, treaſurer of the common ſtock, in the exalted poſt of an apoſtle, unable to ſup-

port

port the character of divine miſſion and other ſuch pretenſions, has explained the whole myſtery, and ſhewn it to be nothing better than an arrant cheat, acted upon the undiſcerning and credulous part of mankind. This diſcovery of his was not made by a mere ſlip of indiſcretion, or want of caution to guard his high-flown claims; it was not made in conſequence of terrible threats, but the diſcovery was purely *voluntary*. He could not ſatisfy himſelf any longer in wearing the maſque—in acting a part, the bottom of which was nothing but the moſt horrible deceit. He could not any longer aſſociate with ſuch a crew of miſcreant impoſtors with any degree of ſatisfaction, and therefore has been ſo true and faithful to his conſcience; ſo kind and generous to mankind, as to betray his maſter—to detect the head of this falſe ſociety, and to aid in apprehending him, that he may be brought to condign puniſhment."

Theſe ſentiments are very natural, and we cannot ſuppoſe but that many inferred them from the proceedings of Judas againſt his Lord. And had Judas left matters in *this* ſituation; had he perſiſted in his fault, and diſcovered no grief and penitence on account of it, it would have been, at leaſt, a very great *ſtumbling block* in the way of our belief of the *ſincerity* of Chriſt, and the *divinity* of his miſſion. But let us purſue the traitor and watch the event. Is he inflexible and relentleſs! Does he ſecond what he has done by vindicating his conduct! Does he ſay, If it was to be repeated, he would act the ſame part again! (This he would have ſaid, if he had be-

trayed and detected an impoſtor; for who would not think it his duty ſo to do!) No! he ſpeaks a very different language; he entertains very different ſentiments of the matter; he neither vindicates nor palliates his conduct; but, on the contrary, recoils with horror at the reflection of it. It was not conſcience, generouſly informed and awakened, that led him to betray his maſter. It is conſcience, dreadfully alarmed, depreſſed with the heavieſt guilt, that reproves him for it, as a deed uncommonly foul and perfidious. *He repented* himſelf; bitterly lamented what he had done; wiſhed moſt paſſionately he had never done it. It was not a tranſient, flighty ſorrow, that might ariſe in a generous mind at the detection and condemnation of an old friend and companion (which might be the caſe, wherever impoſture was the object) but an extreme, unbounded tranſport of grief and diſtraction, ariſing from the conviction of the blackeſt and moſt enormous guilt in betraying the righteous and innocent. Thus runs his confeſſion (and, conſidering *who* ſpoke it, and *when*, and *before whom* it was ſpoken, it is one of the moſt extraordinary atteſtations to the divinity of Chriſt's miſſion that the New Teſtament affords us.) *I have ſinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.* Mat. xxvii. 4. Here lies the emphaſis of ſorrows. He had betrayed, not a vile hypocrite, not a lucrative impoſtor, but *innocent* blood. This was the bitter reflection; and here the lines of conviction met and terminated; here the billows of grief, horror and deſpair were collected,

ed, continually *caſting up mire and dirt*, with which *his mind and conſcience were defiled.*

But could Judas in ſome meaſure ſooth his grief by palliating his guilt. No! it admitted of no excuſe or extenuation. He had enviouſly and deliberately oppoſed the truth; what he knew and was fully convinced was the truth. Now, could Judas have called in queſtion the meſſiahſhip of Chriſt, though he might not have been able poſitively to have denied it (but this he would moſt certainly and infallibly have been able to determine, having known Chriſt ſo much, and attended him ſo long) I ſay, *ſuppoſing* Judas could have entertained any doubt of the truth of Chriſt's meſſiahſhip, this would have mitigated his ſorrow in ſome degree, and ſoothed his anguiſh. Could he have argued with himſelf—"Ye agonizing reflections ſubſide "—conſcience be eaſy; perhaps Jeſus is not "what he profeſſed to be; nor is religion of "ſo ſacred a nature, and of ſuch eternal im- "portance as he declared, and would have "men believe. How many deceivers have there "been in the world, whoſe pretenſions have "been very extraordinary, and who have, for "a time, ſupported their pretenſions by ſome "wonderful appearances! Perhaps Jeſus has "been acting and impoſing on others a falſe "and pretended character. Then, ſure, there "is no cauſe for me thus to be ſwallowed up with "the horror of guilty conviction. Who knows "but that he, in reality, richly deſerved to be "detected and betrayed as he hath been by "me?"——Could Judas have any way, and by

by any plauſible means, have queſtioned the divine miſſion and integrity of his maſter; he would have dwelt on the ſuſpicion, have heightened it, and argued from it in order to have allayed the torment of his conſcience. But he knew, and was, beyond controverſy, aſſured that he, whom he had betrayed, was the Meſſiah and king of the church of God, he could no more call it in queſtion than he could the ſun's ſhining at noon-day. His conviction and perſuaſions were too ſtrong and firmly built, for any doubts and ſuſpicions to intervene and have any influence upon him.

Here then, I apprehend, the matter comes to a criſis. Judas muſt know *who* and *what* Chriſt was. If he had *not* been what he *profeſſed*, he ought to have been *detected*; if Judas had detected him, he would have done a right and juſtifiable thing, and would *not* have *wounded* his conſcience by doing it, much leſs have *deſpaired* and *hanged* himſelf on account of it. But having done it, his *conſcience* was ſtung with the conviction of its guilt. He *confeſſed* before the prieſts and elders that he had done *amiſs*, in that he had betrayed the *innocent* blood—his confeſſion was followed with a *reſtitution* of his reward of iniquity and perfidy—his mind was tormented in conſequence of his treachery and guilt—guilt drove him to *deſpair*, and deſpair ended in *ſelf-deſtruction*. See, then, in the cataſtrophe of this miſerable traitor, one of the moſt convincing evidences of Chriſt's divine miſſion! The wrath of man ſhall praiſe him, and the malice of man ſhall aſſert his glory.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

THE having never yet been able to procure my numbers of the Repoſitory, till above a month after the publication, muſt be my excuſe for the lateneſs, and inaccuracy too, of theſe ſhort remarks on Pyrrho's letter, from your's and his reſpectful humble ſervant,

W. W.

ALL the miraculous power, which appears from the hiſtory to be exerted by Peter in the caſe of Ananias and Sapphira, was his declaring, by divine inſpiration, the ſecret fraud, and Ananias's ſudden death to be a judgment of God upon him for it, and foretelling the like immediate ſudden death of Sapphira his wife and confederate, upon the ſame account, which ſeems abundantly ſufficient to cauſe great fear to come upon the church, and upon as many as heard of thoſe things.

It is ſaid afterwards, that *by the hands of the apoſtles* were many ſigns and wonders wrought among the people, *i. e.* the apoſtles were made inſtruments, in God's hand, of many ſigns and wonders; which refers in general to the miracles God wrought by them; but no farther to this particular caſe, then to Peter's foretelling the immediate death of one of theſe perſons, and ſuggeſting the occaſion of that of them both.

I can-

I cannot think God intruſted any of theſe powers to the apoſtles to be exerted, much leſs exceeded in the leaſt, *at their own diſcretion.* Wherein did Moſes exceed his commiſſion? Was it not to ſtrike the rock, and water ſhould come out? and he did ſo. The Lord was diſpleaſed, indeed, with Moſes and Aaron, not becauſe they exceeded their commiſſion, but becauſe they did not *ſanctify him in the eyes of the people*, viz. by aſcribing the favour and the miracle to God, but even to take the honour of it too much to themſelves. *Ye rebels, muſt* we *fetch you water out of the rock?* The Pſalmiſt aſcribes God's diſpleaſure, on this occaſion, to Moſes's ſpeaking unadviſedly with his lips, Pſa. cvi. 33.

I cannot help ſtill thinking, as I have long thought, the *delivering perſons to Satan*, in theſe ſacred writings, means no more than excluding them (at leaſt for a time) from communion with the church or kingdom of God; which was, in effect, returning them into the kingdom of Satan, the god of this world, but had no effect at all upon their health or temporal affairs. This ancient diſcipline, in its primitive ſimplicity, or diſcountenancing the criminal and ſcandalous indulgence of the fleſh, had its deſired effect upon ingenuous minds; and nothing can have a good effect upon a thoroughly diſingenuous *mind*, whatever reſtraint it may lay upon the outward behaviour. The *new man*, I apprehend, in theſe ſacred writings, ſignifies the profeſſion of chriſtianity, an inſtantaneous change of character and connection. The bringing under

der the body, or mortifying the inordinate luſts of the fleſh, was a conſequence of this, and, more or leſs, a work of time, according as they had got head by conſtitution or habit.

The moſt gentle admonition or rebuke of a ſinner is a ſort of chaſtiſement, or puniſhment of his mind, though it affect not his body or his property; and the true primitive diſcipline, I think, was no more than a ſharper rebuke of the ſame kind. The *divine diſcipline* of Providence, in the hand of God, may go farther, and affect life, limbs, ſenſes, property and proſperity, either of private perſons or communities.

They ſhall lay hands *on the ſick, and they ſhall recover*, ſeems fully explained by James, v. 15. *The* prayer *of faith ſhall ſave the ſick, and the Lord ſhall raiſe him up. Prayer for particular perſons* (whatever was the occaſion) ſeems to have been, at that time and long after, perpetually attended with this token or ceremony, of laying the hand or hands over him that was prayed for; and thereby ſuch prayer came to be denominated *laying on of hands*, from this circumſtance, and diſtinguiſhed from thoſe prayers which were more general, where the perſon officiating often ſpread his hands, more elevated, as it were, over the whole aſſembly, the whole chriſtian church, or the whole world. Thus we are told of perſons bringing little children in arms to Chriſt, that he might *lay his hands on them*, i. e. *bleſs* or *pray* for them; and the apoſtles conferred ſpiritual gifts on particular perſons by laying on of hands, *i. e.* by praying to God to confer them; and others were

were thus recommended to the grace of God as officers in the church; not that the healing virtue in one caſe, or the miraculous gifts or any authority in the other, were then imagined to paſs through the fingers of the good men, whatever they have been ſince.

Theſe ſhort hints are freely ſubmitted to your correction, or entire ſuppreſſion, and will very probably be ſuperſeded by a more full and judicious anſwer from ſome better hand.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

BY what authority does Dr. Harwood paraphraſe, or liberally tranſlate, *In the beginning*, in the firſt verſe of John's goſpel, *Before the origin of this world?* Even ſuppoſing that the evangeliſt refers preciſely to the ſame period of time, that Moſes refers to in the firſt verſe of Geneſis, the word *before* muſt be deemed an intruder. I dare ſay, that Dr. Harwood himſelf would not paraphraſe the firſt verſe of Geneſis, *Before the origin of this world*, God created the heavens and the earth. But a very ſlight examination of the matter will convince us, that the evangeliſt thought not about the beginning of this world, but the beginning of the goſpel diſpenſation. The parallel paſſages in Mark i. 1. and Luke i. 2. are a ſufficient proof of this. Mark ſays expreſsly, *The beginning of the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt*; and hence is it not natural to infer, that John had the beginning of the ſame diſpenſation

diſpenſation in view? Luke ſays, *Foraſmuch as many have taken in hand to ſet forth in order a declaration of theſe things which are moſt ſurely believed among us: even as they delivered them unto us, who from* the beginning *were eye-witneſſes and miniſters of the word.* Here, though this evangeliſt barely ſays, *From the beginning*, as John ſays, *In the beginning*, we are at no loſs for his meaning; for we very well know that the eye-witneſſes and miniſters of the word, of whom he ſpeaks, did not exiſt before the origin of this world. If John has written obſcurely, then does not Luke explain him clearly? But, we need not confine ourſelves to this ſeemingly forcible evidence. When the apoſtle Peter ſays, Acts xi. 15. *The Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning*, he evidently means by *the beginning*, the firſt effuſion of the miraculous powers, the beginning of thoſe things which he was juſt going to relate. The apoſtle Paul alſo, when he ſays, 2 Theſſ. ii. 13, *Brethren beloved of the Lord, becauſe God hath* from the beginning *choſen you to ſalvation*, ſeems to point at *the firſt publication of the goſpel.* But, if we ſhould now ſuppoſe, that the apoſtles, and the other evangeliſts, may have underſtood the words in a different ſenſe from that of John, we cannot have our doubts more effectually reſolved, than by applying to John's teſtimony, in other places. John vi. 64. *Jeſus knew* from the beginning, *who they were that believed not.* xv. 27. *Ye have been with me*, from the beginning. xvi. 4. *Theſe things ſaid I not unto you* at the beginning, *becauſe I was with you.* 1 John i. 1. *That which was* from the beginning, *which we*

have

have heard.—ii. 7. *An old commandment which ye had* from the beginning. See alſo ver. 24.—iii. 11. 2 John v. 6. The meaning of the words, in all thoſe paſſages, is obvious at firſt ſight, and hence we ſeem warranted to interpret *in the beginning was the word*; Jeſus Chriſt himſelf was the chief corner ſtone of the goſpel, the firſt foundation of that building which God has created. Thus the author of the epiſtle to the Hebrews ii. 3. *How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation? which* at the firſt *began to be ſpoken by the Lord.*

PHILALETHES.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

If you think the queſtion contained in what follows will any way ſubſerve the intereſt of truth, you will, I am perſuaded, give it a place in your Repoſitory. I am, Gentlemen,

Your humble ſervant,

G H.

I AM a chriſtian, but a rational one—I believe in *Chriſt*, not merely becauſe I was educated in ſuch a belief, but becauſe, after what I think a fair and unprejudiced enquiry, it ſeems to me that the evidences in favour of *chriſtianity* are ſufficient to eſtabliſh its truth. Yet I am not ſo bigotted, but that I am willing to give up my religion, if it can be ſhown to reſt on a falſe founda-

foundation. I entirely agree with Lord *Bolingbroke*, when he ſays (p. 142. of his *Letters on the Study and Uſe of Hiſtory*) "Hiſtory alone can "furniſh the proofs, that the religion which "chriſtian divines teach is of God." Now as I make no doubt but there are many *gentlemen* of Lord B's *known* ſentiments with reſpect to chriſtianity, I hope and beg, that ſome one or more of them will attend to this call, to inform the world, "What they think ſufficient to au-"thenticate any hiſtory; and in which of thoſe "particulars, which they eſteem eſſentially ne-"ceſſary for this purpoſe, they apprehend the "goſpel-hiſtory to be deficient." I do not propoſe this queſtion for the ſake of getting an opportunity to triumph over, or inſult the gentlemen who diſbelieve chriſtianity; for I wiſh them to be always treated with complaiſance and reſpect; and lament that ſo many of them have been ſo uncharitably cenſured, by thoſe chriſtian divines whoſe religion ſhould have taught them better. All I have in view is, to have the evidences of chriſtianity ſearched to the very bottom. Truth is deſirable for its own ſake; but *religious truth* all men are, beyond expreſſion, concerned in. The *gentlemen* upon whom I call, will not be diſpleaſed with this opportunity of explaining, in a few words, the grounds upon which they reject chriſtianity; nor will the ſincere friends of our religion diſapprove of a queſtion, the anſwer to which may afford an opportunity of eſtabliſhing the authenticity of the goſpel hiſtory, ſtill more firmly than ever.

P. S. If the above queſtion has ever been directly and explicitly anſwered by the rejecters of chriſtianity; pleaſe to ſuppreſs this letter, and favour me ſo far as to direct me to the anſwer.

A Query concerning the Time when the three firſt Goſpels were publiſhed.

IT has often occurred to me, that great ſervice might be done to the cauſe of chriſtianity, if ſome learned perſon would undertake to produce a ſimple and clear proof, that the three former goſpels were publiſhed, or written, before the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. One independent, ſubſtantial, and undeniable argument upon this ſubject would, as appears to me, very ſtrongly, not to ſay irrefragably, confirm the divine miſſion of our ſaviour. Upon this account, I could heartily wiſh to ſee this matter taken up by one or other of thoſe able writers concerned in your very inſtructive periodical publication. It ſeems as if a ſhort proof of this point might be very deciſive; and, perhaps, contribute more towards the eſtabliſhment of chriſtianity, than many volumes. It is for this reaſon I have taken the liberty to recommend it to your conſideration, and I hope my good intentions will, at leaſt, plead my excuſe. I am, with much regard, Gentlemen,

Your very humble ſervant,

May 4, 1770. Q.

THE Theological Repoſitory.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

The following paper *on the obligation of* TRUTH, communicated by a friend, was found among the papers of the late ingenious and worthy Dr. Duchal, one who inſtructed the world by his example, his preaching, and writings, when living, and whoſe name will be had in everlaſting remembrance by all who knew him. It is ſuppoſed to have been written many years ago, when the controverſy concerning ſubſcription, both in England and Ireland, was warmly on foot. The publication of it at this time cannot be unſeaſonable, when the ſame controverſy is revived. If you think proper to give it a place in your Repoſitory, you will oblige, among many others, Gentlemen,

Your very humble ſervant,

SINCERUS.

AS it is acknowledged by all, that the controverſy concerning chriſtian liberty is of great importance, ſo it has had very conſider-

able effects. The proteſtant principles are generally much better underſtood than before; the juſt liberties of mankind are more ſtrenuouſly aſſerted; and a great many, happily delivered from the ſhackles of prejudice and bigotry, have dared to examine and underſtand their own religion, and to embrace nothing as an article of faith that does not appear to them ſupported by ſufficient evidence.

Of the friends of liberty, many have openly declared for it, and refuſed to ſubmit to any teſts of orthodoxy, that are human compoſures, as terms of communion, chriſtian or miniſterial. Others, that ſeem to be as thoroughly in the principles of liberty, give way to theſe impoſitions, and when they are called upon, ſubſcribe to the articles that are, by civil or eccleſiaſtical authority, eſtabliſhed, where they are to bear a public character.

Probably ſome, believing theſe articles, though they diſlike the impoſition of them, think it not unlawful, and therefore prudent to ſubſcribe, rather than expoſe themſelves to great perſonal inconveniences, and cut themſelves off from an opportunity of public ſervice. But there are inſtances, wherein it is impoſſible not to ſuſpect that men ſubſcribe, who are not only in principle againſt all ſuch impoſition, but who do not believe, or at leaſt have great ſcruples about ſeveral of the articles impoſed. If this ſuppoſition ſhould appear to the reader harſh and uncharitable, it will perhaps reconcile him to it, to know, that it is at the ſame time ſuppoſed, that theſe men do not contradict their conſciences,

or

or do what they think is ſinful; but that they have a way of thinking that makes this practice appear to them both lawful and prudent; ſome way of reconciling it to integrity.

We have heard a great deal about ſubſcribing articles, rather as articles of peace than of faith; that is, men mean no more by it, than that they are reſolved not to diſturb the peace of the church by any oppoſition to them. If this be the declared ſenſe of the impoſers, and the articles ſubſcribed, though not believed, are of ſo little importance, that it would ſerve no valuable end to raiſe a conteſt about them, I cannot ſee (if the perſon ſubſcribing can reconcile himſelf to ſubſcription in other reſpects) that there is any thing in ſuch a ſubſcription inconſiſtent with candour. But if this is not the declared ſenſe of the impoſers, nor publiſhed in a proper manner as the ſenſe of the ſubſcriber, the difficulty ſtill remains, how it can conſiſt with plain honeſty, for a man to ſubſcribe propoſitions he does not believe, while that ſubſcription is underſtood (which is not at all contradicted by him) as a profeſſion that he does believe them.

Propoſitions, the terms of which can be in a tolerable manner explained, ſo as to expreſs what the ſubſcriber believes, though that is not the moſt natural, nor the ſenſe in which the impoſers underſtand them, have not ſo much to do with the preſent debate; which is chiefly concerning ſuch propoſitions as can no way be ſo explained, and which perhaps are expreſsly contrary to the real opinion of the ſubſcriber. The prin-

cipal queſtion here is, whether it be lawful to ſubſcribe what a man believes is falſe, or does not believe to be true. If there are none that do this, I am very well ſatisfied that this paper ſhould be thrown by, as a mere impertinence; but if there are ſuch, I hope it will not be wholly uſeleſs, to propoſe to the reader ſome things that appear to me very good reaſons why it ſhould not be done. And I do this with a diſpoſition, indeed a deſire to be better informed; a deſire that grows from intereſt, and therefore, be ſure, will be earneſt enough. It would very ſenſibly oblige me, and many others in the ſame circumſtances, to convince us that we might ſafely forſake that which we account the *honeſt*, but which is certainly at preſent the loſing ſide of the queſtion.

Truth, by which I mean the agreement of our external profeſſions with our real ſentiments, has been always highly eſteemed. The original determination of the mind to virtue, is no where more evident or more ſenſibly felt than in this inſtance. Men have a natural abhorrence of diſingenuity, and reſent nothing more warmly than the imputation of it, which is thought a vital wound to honour. A ſtrict regard to truth is eſſential to a good character. It is what men expect, what they think they have a right to in their converſation with one another. It has been conſidered and recommended as the neceſſary cement of human ſociety, and without which it could not ſubſiſt; and men that have diſregarded it, have been marked out with juſt infamy, as moſt dangerous enemies to mankind. It is impoſſible

impoſſible to eſteem and love them, as it is not to eſteem and love the ingenuous and upright. So much nature teaches us. And revealed religion confirms all this, every where repreſenting trick and falſehood as very great crimes, and recommending ſimplicity of ſpirit, as not only a moſt valuable quality, and pleaſing to God, but indeed as neceſſary to our acceptance with him. Theſe things are ſo obvious, that they do not need illuſtration; and a man, one would think, muſt have done great violence to his original frame, if he has not very ſenſible impreſſions of them.

A conſcious departure from truth, in any caſe, muſt be deſigned for ſerving ſome end or other, that cannot be ſerved otherwiſe; for no man will diſſemble merely for diſſembling ſake, or chooſe falſehood as the means, when he might as eaſily and certainly gain his point by truth and honeſty. Now if the end he has in view be a bad one, there is confeſſedly nothing to be ſaid for diſſimulation. But may not a man diſſemble with honour, if he does it to ſerve a good end, and from a principle of benevolence to mankind? To this ſome would anſwer, that it does, indeed, greatly extenuate the fault, but cannot change the nature of the action, which is ſtill evil. But perhaps others would ſay, that diſſimulation, when it ſprings from benevolence, and will contribute to the common good, ceaſes to be evil, and has no more the nature of tranſgreſſion.

For what avails truth, otherwiſe than as it ſerves good ends, and contributes to the happi-

neſs of mankind? Is it valuable; can it be commended but for this purpoſe? All real good conſiſts in happineſs or pleaſure, all real evil in pain or miſery. Nothing, therefore, can be good (in the moral, more than in the natural ſenſe) which does not, in the whole amount of its effects and conſequences, produce happineſs, that is, pure pleaſure, or at leaſt more pleaſure than pain. Nothing can be evil that does not, in the whole amount, produce miſery, or, at leaſt, more pain than pleaſure. And as the great deſign of all morality, which is to produce happineſs, ought to direct our judgments with reſpect to the particular branches of it, ſo we cannot account an action good, that does not tend to happineſs, nor an action evil that does tend to it. Nor is any thing, and therefore not truth, good, otherwiſe than as it produces good or happineſs, nor is diſſimulation evil when it does produce it.

This way of thinking will be ſuſpected by many. But I ſhall not at preſent enter into the debate concerning the nature and foundations of morality. I will, for once, take this ſcheme for granted, and even upon it endeavour to ſhew that diſſimulation, though to ſerve a good purpoſe, is ſtill a crime.

I ſuppoſe it will be without diſpute acknowledged, that if any man has a right to diſſemble for ſerving a good end, then every man has that right. For no man can pretend to it upon any foundation that is peculiar to himſelf, or that is not common to all men. Now if all men were to diſſemble, only when their diſſimulation

lation would anſwer an end really good, then, indeed, their diſſimulation could do no harm. But ſuch a ſtate of human nature is not to be ſuppoſed. And if ſuch a ſtate could be ſuppoſed, in which all men ſhould aim at what is really good, it will be eaſily perceived, that diſſimulation would be wholly uſeleſs; for ſuch integrity of deſign in all men, would be as ſucceſsful in the meaſures of truth as falſehood. What does a man diſſemble for, but to ſerve ſome purpoſe (which in this argument is ſuppoſed to be a good one) that he cannot ſerve without it? He impoſes upon his neighbour, that he may do good to his neighbour, or himſelf, or both. Now if all men ſteadily aimed at what is really good, there could be no occaſion for betraying them into it by falſehood. But as men may be often miſtaken in their apprehenſions of things, and the meaſures they take, we can have no aſſurance, that a man's diſſembling (I ſpeak now of a man ſuppoſed to be good and benevolent) will ſerve an end really good, but only an end that he thinks ſo. And if one man has a right to do this, every man has it. Now upon this I would propoſe the following queſtion, viz. "Whether it be moſt "for the common good, that all men ſhould act "according to truth and ingenuity in every in-"ſtance, or that every man, without regard to "theſe, ſhould purſue truth or falſehood, as he "judges it will anſwer a good end." I have the following things to offer in ſupport of the former, viz. that it will be moſt for the common good that all men ſhould follow truth.

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The Supreme Mind, who intended the good of his creatures, muſt, if we would not reflect on his wiſdom, be ſuppoſed to have furniſhed them with proper means of attaining it. And if their happineſs depends upon their own actions and conduct, he muſt be ſuppoſed to have framed them with principles, inſtincts or determinations (or give them what other name you pleaſe) of the mind, by which they may be put in the way of it. We ſee how provident he has been in this matter with reſpect to the brutal creation, every ſpecies being endowed with thoſe particular inſtincts that are ſuited to its circumſtances, the ſervices it was deſigned for, and the happineſs it is to enjoy. The contemplation of this has ſtruck curious obſervers, in all ages, with admiration. And we find he has not been, as it is to be expected he ſhould be, not leſs liberal to mankind. For, beſides a general benevolence, there are certain particular principles and inſtincts planted in men, by which they are determined very powerfully, to certain actions that are neceſſary to their own happineſs, and that of the ſpecies. This is plain in the tender affections of parents to their children, and of one intimate friend to another; in the painful ſympathy we feel with perſons in deep diſtreſs, the paſſionate deſires of honour and eſteem, and other ſuch things. And in purſuance of theſe principles and inſtincts, men are led to what is profitable to themſelves, and contributes to the public good, even when they are not aiming at it, or at all meditating the way of ſerving it. And theſe principles are common to mankind:

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all are agreed in them: we expect to find them every where, and look with wonder and abhorrence upon any characters, that ſeem to have very little (for it is not to be ſuppoſed there are any that have nothing at all) of them.

Now the determination of the mind to truth is one of theſe principles, and has as much of nature in it as any other; all men approve candour and honeſty, and abhor trick and diſſimulation. Nor will any man uſe it that can compaſs his end in an honeſt manner. The mind is certainly determined to truth when it is not forced away by ſome mean intereſt, ſome baſe end. So that truth or ſincerity is far from being a thing indifferent. And a man muſt have forſaken the ſimplicity of nature, and act a part that is conſtrained, and a violence done to himſelf, when he ſpeaks or acts againſt it. And this appears to be the caſe with reſpect to men in all ages and nations; and if there be ſuch a thing at all as an inſtinct of nature of the moral kind, this is one; one of theſe few principles that are to be known to, and govern all mankind.

And as the author of nature has wrought into it this law, ſo in the revelation he has given us nothing is more inſiſted on. This is ſo obvious, that it would be a kind of reproach to the chriſtian reader to name particular texts of ſcripture. Now upon all this I argue, that it muſt be moſt for the common good that men cleave exactly to truth, becauſe he that planted in them this inſtinct, and gave them this law, certainly knew and deſigned what would be of greateſt advantage

advantage to his creatures. He has appointed this as the natural, and therefore it muſt be the moſt probable way of ſerving the true intereſts of mankind, for he cannot be miſtaken. This is to me ſuch a ſtrong preſumption in favour of the uſefulneſs of truth, and the neceſſity of it to promote the real good of the world, that nothing but demonſtration in favour of falſehood could convince me.

To ſet this argument ſtill in a ſtronger light, it muſt be conſidered, that what is ſaid concerning truth and ſincerity, and the power of diſpenſing with them to ſerve a good end, may be applied to all actions morally good and evil, and to all the laws of God and nature concerning them. I think if any thing is allowed to be a law of God and nature, this is, that when we have a proper call to it, we ſhould ſpeak the the truth as it is in our heart. Now if we may diſpenſe with this law, when we judge our doing ſo is for the public good, may we not, for the ſame reaſon, diſpenſe with the laws that enjoin chaſtity and temperance, that prohibit murder, adultery and theft. Let us ſuppoſe, then, that there are ſome caſes in which acts of adultery or murder would immediately ſerve an end that appears to us to be good. In theſe we are not only innocent, but do well and commendably when we commit them. Nature, it is true, is ſtrongly reluctant againſt this, but that is no matter, if there be apparent good in it. But can it be ſuppoſed that it would, upon the whole, be really for the public good that this ſcheme ſhould be put in practice; that every man ſhould have liberty to commit ſuch violences, when his

his mind, liable to innumerable prejudices and corruptions, ſhould ſuggeſt to him that it would ſerve a good end. Suppoſe it poſſible that, in ſome particular caſes, real good might be done, can we imagine the good would prove equal to the miſchief that may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to be done in purſuance of ſuch a liberty? And is it not natural to argue that he, whoſe theſe laws are, perfectly knows, and ſincerely intends the good of his ſubjects; and that if the obſervance of theſe laws had not been moſt for their good, he would not have given them. Why does not the general law of benevolence ſerve for all the purpoſes of the law-giver? Why have we any particular precepts or prohibitions at all? Is not the plain meaning of it this; that it is for the good of mankind, that the actions commanded ſhould be done, and that we ſhould abſtain from thoſe that are forbidden? They are forbidden becauſe they are evil, which I think muſt amount to this much, that a general licenſe in the practice of them (ſo far a licenſe, I mean, that a man may do them when he judges it will anſwer a good end) would, upon the whole, be hurtful to mankind.

Again; If the laws of nature and of God, are not to be univerſally, and, in all caſes, obſerved, by what rule ſhall men direct their actions? By the public good? In the preſent ſtate of nature, how precarious a rule muſt this be? If, indeed, men knew certainly and infallibly what would be moſt for the common good, and were ſteadfaſtly diſpoſed to purſue it, this ſcheme would do well enough. But in a ſtate in which men know ſo little, in which their minds

minds are ſo narrow, and liable to ſo many prejudices, it is perfectly romantic. Who is it that can thoroughly perceive all the tendencies and conſequences of an action, all the influences it may have upon himſelf and the public? Who is ſo well acquainted with the connections and dependencies of things, as to be able, certainly, to determine all the future events and iſſues of what he now does? Are not the very wiſeſt men, upon many occaſions, bewildered and loſt in ſuch inquiries, and diſappointed in their conjectures? And does not experience itſelf teach us, that our imperfect minds, puzzled and perplexed among uncertain contemplations of iſſues and events, have no ſatisfying reſt, but in doing what we apprehend, according to the laws of God and nature, is our duty; and in laying aſide all ſolicitude about diſtant conſequences, which are equally without the compaſs of our knowledge and power. And if this is the caſe with the wiſeſt and moſt penetrating, and with men that think moſt impartially, how much more muſt it be with narrow and weak minds, and that are eaſily biaſſed and perverted by prejudice. Yet their actions have an influence upon the public good, as well as thoſe of others, and there muſt be rules for their direction, ready at hand, and perfectly known to them. This makes it evident, that our own judgment concerning what will be moſt for the public good, cannot be a ſufficient rule for our conduct in the preſent ſtate of things, nor a proper means of ſerving the true intereſts of mankind. We muſt, therefore, return to theſe few plain principles of morality that are wrought

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into our nature, that are common and known to all mankind, and by them direct our way. By the help of these, we see easily and plainly what we are to do; but when we depart from them, even suppose we intended good, we shall lose ourselves in conjecture and uncertainty.

Besides, it is not possible that the methods of dissimulation should be fit means of serving the public good, even supposing we certainly knew it; for they are not at all adapted to the generality of mankind; and there are but few that could do any good by them. For to render them effectual there needs much art and contrivance; great vigilance and caution; mystery and darkness in a man's temper and way, and a constant guard upon nature, that it may not betray itself in the simplicity of truth. Now these are qualities that are found with few, and therefore it cannot be a natural, nor intended to be a general method of doing good, to which these are necessary. Truth and sincerity are plain and simple things; no man can be at a loss to act according to them; but they are only masters in design and execution that can succeed in the other method. Nature is here against men; nature that abhors dissimulation, and always, when a force is not put upon it, follows truth. And how aukwardly does a man act that contradicts nature? He puts himself into a way, in which there must be much uneasy constraint; in which he must act with difficulty, and in which he cannot be uniform, because he does not act himself. These things make it evident that dissimulation cannot be a proper general method of serving the public good. And yet

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if the practice of it be allowed to thoſe who are capable of it, when they judge it will ſerve that end, it muſt unavoidably become general. For diſſimulation has mighty advantages in many particular inſtances over the naked ſimplicity of truth. The honeſt man is by no means upon equal terms with the diſſembler; and therefore muſt, for his own ſake, lay aſide that regard to truth that expoſes him to injury, and muſt, in his own defence, diſſemble as well at he can. It is not a ſubſtantial anſwer to this, that diſſimulation is not contended for, farther than a man judges it will ſerve a good end; for a man may judge that an action will ſerve a good end, which is a very ſenſible injury to his neighbour, and the perſon that is like to be the ſufferer, is not to give up his own intereſt in complaiſance to his neighbour's judgment. Nature will teach him to defend himſelf; and if he muſt ſuffer by cleaving to truth, it will teach him (ſuppoſing he is ſatisfied as to the lawfulneſs of it, which is the ſuppoſition in this argument) to give up truth, and to oppoſe his antagoniſt with his own weapons, ſo that the practice muſt become univerſal, though it is by no means fit to be ſo nor the generality of men capable of ſucceeding in it.

And how ſtrange and unnatural muſt the ſtate of things be, which, upon the ſcheme of our adverſaries, we are obliged to ſuppoſe; in which a fact could not be certainly known by teſtimony; in which no promiſe or contract could be relied on, no profeſſion of kindneſs could be believed, no character truly known; in which we could have no ſatisfying aſſurance of theſe things,

things, not by the moſt ſolemn promiſes or oaths (for if it is allowable to ſpeak and act againſt truth without, it is certainly to do it with all poſſible circumſtances of ſolemnity) not even from a man of the beſt and moſt benevolent ſpirit, farther than we had reaſon to believe, he judged it for the common good, in that particular inſtance, to ſpeak truth. Who can imagine, that ſuch a ſtate of things would be the beſt? Is it not rather apparent, that ſociety could not ſubſiſt in it; that the execution of laws, that commerce, and all civil relations in life muſt become perfectly precarious, and life itſelf miſery and a burden. What! a ſtate in which I could not have full ſatisfaction, from the very beſt men, concerning the truth of any thing; a ſtate in which their integrity is no pledge to me that they will not deceive me. On the contrary it is known they will, when they judge it for the common good. Their underſtanding then is the only thing I can reſt on, not as a ſecurity that they will not impoſe on me, but that if they do, it ſhall be to ſerve a good end. Who can think ſuch a ſtate of things deſirable; a ſtate, in fine, in which diſſimulation, though it is here ſuppoſed to be uſed only for an end that is accounted a good one, muſt, as appears from the reaſoning above, become univerſal, and is therefore big with infinite miſchief.

It ought not to be alledged as an exception to this reaſoning, that all men will not follow truth, but thoſe only that have good diſpoſitions; and as for theſe, they will do what appears

to be beſt, whether they think themſelves under obligations to truth or not, and for the other, they cannot be bound by any ſuch obligations; ſo that the common good is not like to be much better ſerved by the ſcheme that ſuppoſes our regards to truth neceſſary, than by that which allows diſſimulation. This, I ſay, ought not to be alledged; for, beſides what has been ſaid of the impoſſibility of judging certainly concerning the influence that an action may have upon the common good, which ſhews the unreaſonableneſs and dangers of leaving this to every man's judgment; beſides this, I ſay, in the other ſcheme, there is ſuppoſed an obligation ariſing from truth itſelf, an obligation of which nature is exceedingly ſenſible. From a ſenſe of this men do, on many occaſions, what is really for the public good, without minding or having it at all in their thoughts; and many, on whom the principles of benevolence ſeem to have little influence, will boggle at an action that violates truth, which, were it not for that, they would do without any ſcruple. There is even, in very bad men, a ſenſe of honour in acting a ſincere part; that when all other principles fail, will determine them to abſtain from the evil that is inconſiſtent with, and to do theſe actions to which it directs them. This, I think, will not be diſputed by any that have obſerved the temper and way of mankind; and if ſo, the world muſt ſuffer by neglect of truth, even granting, what the objection ſuppoſes, that they that have good diſpoſitions, and will do good, whether they think themſelves under obligations to truth or not. Granting this, I ſay, the world

will

will ſuffer by the neglect of truth; juſt ſo much as it gains by the good men do, from a ſenſe of that obligation, which they would not do without it, or upon any other account.

Farther. How unfavourably does it look upon this ſcheme, that it deſtroys itſelf. Diſſimulation can be of no ſervice longer than a man's inſincere profeſſion is believed; ſo that his diſſembling in any particular action, and the principles upon which he juſtifies it to himſelf, muſt be concealed. It muſt not be known that there is any liberty of that ſort; for as ſoon as it is known, there is no more credit given to the diſſembler, and the faculty of diſſimulation becomes wholly inſignificant and uſeleſs. It is plain then, that all the ſucceſs of it muſt depend upon the prevailing of principles that condemn it; diſſimulation muſt aſſert theſe principles, and ſtand by them. It is only in truth and ſincerity that it can hope for gaining its end; and yet every thing that recommends that ſincerity, upon which diſſimulation relies, condemns itſelf. Let who will, for me, believe, that ſuch a contradictory and inconſiſtent thing, is a proper means of ſerving any good end, or that the infinitely wiſe author of nature approves it.

Laſtly. I hope it will weigh very much, that the imputation of what I have been arguing againſt, is rejected by the apoſtle Paul with abhorrence and indignation, as a very injurious reproach. Rom. iii. 8. *And not rather, as we be ſlanderouſly reported of, and as ſome affirm that we ſay, Let us do evil, that good may come,*

whoſe damnation is juſt. Theſe words are ſo plain, that they need no comment. And if the practice of doing evil that good may come, is here condemned in the general, it will, with equal juſtice, bear an application to diſſembling for a good end, as to any thing elſe. I would recommend, too, the example that Job has ſet us, who with much warmth animadverts upon ſpeaking wickedly and unrighteouſly, even for God. He would not contradict the law of his own nature, though it were to make an apology for his creator, and to veil what might appear a blemiſh in his adminiſtration. And I hope the ſtrong expreſſions that are frequently met with in ſcripture, of the neceſſity of a ſincere and ſimple ſpirit, to our acceptance with God, will be deeply conſidered. Nor ought we to diſregard the practice of many eminent chriſtians, in the beſt, and ſeveral late ages of the church, who rather than violate truth and diſſemble with the world, were content to ſuffer to the greateſt extremities, even to death. Sure theſe perſons, whoſe memory is ſo precious amongſt us, and whoſe illuſtrious actions are accounted ſuch an advantage to chriſtianity, knew nothing of the lawfulneſs of diſſimulation; by which, if they had been capable of it, they might have freed themſelves from many difficulties, and eſcaped moſt ſevere ſufferings. I am ſenſible, here is an opportunity of ſaying many very moving things, but my buſineſs being not to declaim, but to argue, I ſhall content myſelf with the bare mention of the heroic honeſty of theſe confeſ-

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ſors and martyrs, which no good man but muſt approve and admire.

Againſt all this it will probably be objected, that notwithſtanding theſe arguments, the obedience men are to give to the laws they are under, muſt be left, in a good meaſure, to their own diſcretion. For inſtance: they muſt judge concerning the meaning of the law, and the particular circumſtances that render an action ſinful, which, in other circumſtances, would be virtuous and commendable. For example; the law that forbids murder, does not prohibit the taking away our neighbour's life in any caſe, but only in ſome caſes. And the law that forbids theft, does not mean an univerſal prohibition of taking our neighbour's goods, but only in ſome particular circumſtances. And it muſt be left to the diſcretion of the ſubject, what theſe particular circumſtances are, in which he may, without tranſgreſſion, take away the life or goods of his neighbour, and what are the contrary circumſtances, in which his doing either would be ſinful. Now if men's obedience may, and muſt be regulated by their own judgments, and they are not always obliged to do, what the letter of the law directs, but perhaps juſt the contrary, that they may anſwer the true deſign of it; it appears that they may, in particular caſes, diſpenſe with the general rule, and that they ought to do it always, when their doing ſo will be of real advantage, and promote the common good.

I anſwer; that undoubtedly there are inſtances, particularly ſuch as have been named, in which the general prohibition does not bind the ſubject. Self-defence, though it ſhould be at the

expence of our neighbour's life, is not a tranſgreſſion. And I own it muſt be left to a man to judge, when his own preſervation makes it neceſſary, to take away the life of his antagoniſt. So with reſpect to theft. It is, I think, generally allowed, that a man may take the goods of his neighbour, without his knowledge, and conſent, if he cannot otherwiſe be provided with the neceſſary ſuſtenance of life. But though theſe particular caſes are exceptions to the general rules, and a man's private judgment muſt, in ſeveral reſpects, direct his behaviour, yet there muſt be a great difference made, between ſuch a ſtate of things, and that which ſuppoſes all particular precepts and prohibitions in the ordinary courſe, to be left to a man's judgment to be obeyed or not, as he apprehends good or bad purpoſes will be ſerved by it. For upon this ſuppoſition I cannot ſee that particular laws can ſignify any thing at all. They are really no rules to our conduct. This is plain; for we are to obey or diſobey, as we ſhall judge expedient. And theſe *laws* are not to direct our judgment, but quite another thing, viz. the *public good*. If then theſe laws are not to direct, but wholly to depend on our judgment, we are plainly left to our liberty. All the particular actions commanded or forbidden, become wholly indifferent, that is, neither good nor bad, otherwiſe than as we judge they will promote or hurt the common good. And the laws of God and nature concerning them, are not properly laws, that is, rules for our conduct at all; on the contrary, I humbly think it may be

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inſiſted upon, that a moral precept or prohibition, taken in its true intent and meaning, is not at all to be diſpenſed with. What that meaning is, the ſubject muſt judge, and every ſubject for himſelf. But when he has fixed upon what appears to him, upon ſerious and impartial inquiry, to be the genuine ſenſe of it, he is to look upon this as an indiſpenſable rule of life. To apply this to the inſtances juſt now mentioned. We are commanded not to kill. But we are ſure the meaning of this is not to prohibit the defending ourſelves from the violence of an enemy, even when it cannot be done otherwiſe than at the expence of taking away his life. For the principle of ſelf-preſervation is ſo evidently a law of God and nature, that no other law of God can be ſuppoſed to mean any thing inconſiſtent with it. We are ſure, again, that obſtinate malefactors as enemies to ſociety, ought to be cut off. The very perſervation of ſociety and ſelf-defence render this neceſſary. And therefore no law of God can mean a prohibition of it. We are therefore to do thoſe things, not becauſe we may diſpenſe with the divine law, when we think good, but becauſe theſe things are not intended to be prohibited by that law, and are not comprehened in the true meaning of it. The action ſo circumſtanced is not the action the law forbids, but quite another thing. So with reſpect to theft, if the true deſign of that law is to ſecure our neighbour's property, it muſt be a rule in our conduct not to incroach upon his property; but if we are in circumſtances in which, by the ſame law, he owes us charitable ſupport for

the preſerving our lives, and we can no otherwiſe get that ſupport, we may, no doubt, take what indeed, in that caſe, is not his, but our own. This is not the action the law intends to prohibit. So that the judgment of diſcretion, which muſt be allowed us with reſpect to our obedience, is not, ſuppoſing we underſtand the true meaning of the laws, whether we are to obey or not, but what the meaning of them really is, which, when known, muſt be our rule in the conduct of life. This will appear more plainly in a few obvious inſtances. We are allowed in ſome caſes to kill, and to take what is our neighbour's, notwithſtanding the prohibitions of murder and theft; but whoever imagined or pleaded, that there are caſes in which we may lie with our neighbour's wife; in which we may be guilty of perjury; in which we may covet? Are not mankind agreed that there are no ſuch inſtances? Yet certainly there are obvious caſes in which doing ſuch things, may ſeem to anſwer ſome good end, and in which a man, that had no regard to the particular laws of God, would have no ſcruple about them. And undoubtedly we have as much right to diſpenſe with one law as with another. What is the reaſon then, that mankind allow exceptions to the laws firſt mentioned, and none to the other? It is not certainly that they have not as much power to diſpenſe with the one as the other, but becauſe they have no power to diſpenſe with any; and ſo account taking from one's neighbour, or killing him in ſome caſes, lawful, not becauſe they can diſpenſe with the law, but becauſe it appears

plain

plain, that the actions they allow are ſo circumſtanced, that they are not the actions the law intends to forbid. This muſt be the general ſenſe of mankind, or elſe they would allow of exceptions to the laws againſt adultery, &c. for ſerving the common good, as well as to thoſe againſt killing and ſtealing. And I think the principle this reaſoning is deſigned to maintain, muſt be a juſt one, or elſe the particular laws of God cannot be rules of life to us at all, and ſo cannot anſwer the profeſſed deſign. And as the very prohibition of an action ſuppoſes that the action tends to evil, and that it is for the good of mankind they ſhould abſtain from it; ſo it cannot be imagined, if we ſuppoſe the law-giver a wiſe and gracious being, that by doing ſo they ſhall ſuſtain any loſs. From theſe things it appears very plain to me, that diſſembling, even to ſerve a good end, is unlawful. I leave the application to thoſe (if there be any ſuch) that ſubſcribe to articles of faith they do not believe, and who by ſubſcribing countenance an impoſition, which, in their judgment, they utterly condemn.

But ſuppoſing, which, for the reaſons already given, I cannot grant, that it were lawful to diſſemble, when diſſimulation would do good; before this principle can be applied to juſtify ſuch ſubſcriptions, it muſt be proved that they anſwer a good end, which I own does not at all ſeem clear to me. An action cannot be ſaid to ſerve a good end, which, though it be attended with ſome manifeſt advantages, yet produces inconveniences that are greater; and where, in the

the whole ſum of its neceſſary conſequences, there is more evil than good. Now this appears to me to be the caſe in all ſuch ſubſcriptions. They do, indeed, give men an opportunity of being uſeful in public miniſtrations, which otherwiſe they could not have. And I am very willing to believe, that it is an honeſt deſire of being uſeful to mankind, which is the principal motive that prevails on perſons to ſubmit to them. Nor am I to queſtion, but that in the work of the miniſtry, they may very much promote the common good by thoſe ſervices to the world, which are the nobleſt and moſt important. But ſtill this is far from ſatisfying, if the neceſſary bad conſequences of ſubſcribing, where men are not ſuppoſed to believe all that they ſubſcribe, and are, in their judgment, againſt all ſuch impoſition (and this is the only caſe in debate) be, in the whole amount of them, greater than the good that can be done by it.

Let them conſider, then, that by ſubſcribing they ſubmit to, countenance, and thus far ſupport a power in the church, which they themſelves are ſuppoſed to account a manifold and moſt pernicious uſurpation; a power that derogates from the authority of the Redeemer, as the only king of the church; a power which has been the foundation of much tyranny in it, and the original cauſe of innumerable diviſions, oppreſſions and cruelties; a power upon which only Antichriſt ſtands, or could ſtand; and which, therefore, is to anſwer for all the abuſes which the antichriſtian uſurpation has introduced; a power that ſets itſelf againſt all reformation,

tion, and is the moſt impenetrable ſhield of error, ignorance and ſuperſtition; a power that deſtroys the juſt liberties of mankind, and is contrived for enſlaving the world. Now an action that openly countenances, and as far as the perſon has an opportunity of doing it, ſupports that power, is of ſuch miſchievous tendency, that one can hardly conjecture any good conſequences of the action, that ſhall be equal to it; nor perhaps could a perſon, in theſe circumſtances, do any thing more really uſeful, than, in the moſt open and ſtrenuous manner, to withſtand this inexcuſable impoſition upon the conſciences of chriſtians.

The bearing public teſtimony againſt errors and abuſes in the chriſtian church, has been always accounted, though dangerous, yet a moſt important piece of ſervice. And many, whoſe generoſity, and wiſdom too, we at this day very much admire, have done this, not only at the expence of quitting their public ſtations and ſervices, but of their lives. And who but confeſſes, this was the nobleſt and moſt uſeful ſervice they were capable of. And how can any perſon in a public character, better ſerve God, the church, and his country, ſtill, than by appearing againſt the abuſes that to this day remain. If he ſhould excuſe himſelf from this ſervice, by alledging that any attempt he could ſingly make, would be of little ſervice, and only expoſe him to the malice of bigotry and the wrath of the church; the anſwer is plain, that if one may juſtly plead this as an excuſe, why may not another, why may not all? And how then ſhould we obtain

reformation

reformation of any abuſe? If the great characters to whom, as inſtruments, we owe paſt reformations of the church, had reaſoned in this manner, thoſe reformations could not have been. And who knows what ſucceſs may wait upon attempts, that may appear inconſiderable; what great things may grow from very ſmall beginnings? Could Luther, could Calvin, could any of the Reformers, have ever done as much ſervice by ſubmitting to the impoſitions of the Romiſh church, as they did by appearing openly againſt them? And to come to our own times, and a more direct parallel, will not thoſe gentlemen, with whom I am arguing, acknowledge, that the controverſy, which uſually goes by the name of the Bangorian, and the part which the friends of liberty acted in it, was of the greateſt ſervice poſſible to the world? In fine, if reformation is the moſt valuable end that can be ſerved, the neceſſary ſteps to it muſt be accounted the moſt valuable and uſeful ſervices. Liberty and purity, cannot be contended for at too great an expence. And when a man has a fair opportunity of doing this, and by a ſubmiſſion, which his own judgment condemns, otherwiſe than as it is a means of his uſefulneſs, neglects (for it is hard to ſay, betrays) the moſt uſeful cauſe in the world; it cannot enter into my mind, that he is doing what is moſt for the common good. And has every man has the ſame reaſon to excuſe himſelf that any man has, ſo if every man ſhould do it, the very beſt cauſe muſt be entirely loſt. It is to the ſuperſtitious principles, and powers, that are inconſiſtent with

true

true freedom of thought and inquiry, that we owe all the wildeſt errors, and moſt unaccountable cuſtoms, that have crept into the chriſtian church. And do we not juſtly aſcribe to the ſame cauſe, all the ſuperſtitions of the Mahometan and Pagan world? Is it to be ſuppoſed that theſe could ſtand againſt the juſt uſe of reaſon, and that liberty of thinking, to which the very frame of our nature gives every man a right? And is it poſſible, then, that any ſervice can be done to the world, more important and uſeful, than aſſerting and encouraging this in the moſt ſtrenuous manner? Can a man labour or ſuffer in a better or more generous cauſe.

Beſides, I would have the ſcandal there muſt be in the practice I am arguing againſt, ſeriouſly conſidered. I ſpeak now of ſcandal, in the ſcriptural ſenſe of the word, when men of ſtation and character, ſubmit openly to impoſitions, inconſiſtent with the principles of liberty, which they are known, at leaſt, thought to eſpouſe, when they ſubſcribe articles they are ſuſpected not to believe, when the reaſon by which they ſatisfy themſelves in doing this are concealed; is not their conduct likely enough to be a pernicious example to others, in emboldening them to do what their conſciences condemn? Will not weaker minds be ready to conclude, that however, in acts of diſſimulation, they contradict nature and conſcience, they may be ſafe enough, when they do no more than what they think they ſee done by men of diſtinguiſhed knowledge, whoſe buſineſs it is to teach religion to others, and who, therefore, muſt be ſuppoſed beſt

beſt to underſtand it themſelves? Nor is this all; for it is very natural for the libertines of the age, to take advantage from appearances ſo bad, to think that the profeſſed patrons of religion, are but like themſelves, and that there is no ſuch thing as ſincerity among men. But as this is a point as obvious as it is tender, I ſhall not enlarge upon it, but leave the hint to the ſerious thoughts of thoſe who are concerned in it; putting them in mind, that nothing has ever been of greater ſervice to chriſtianity, than the ſufferings of its ſincere profeſſors, as by theſe they gave unexceptionable proof, that themſelves believed, and cordially embraced what they recommended to others.

Upon the whole; if the reaſoning in this paper does not convince, yet I cannot but think, what has been ſaid will, at leaſt, make the practice appear dubious. And no man, to whom it appears ſo, ought to comply with it; for nothing is more certain than that, *What is not of faith, is ſin.* But after all, if thoſe that take the other ſide of the queſtion, can clearly prove the lawfulneſs of it, I think there is a great demand on them, upon many accounts, to do it; and I am ſure it will prove a very kind office, as it will ſet many free from ſcruples, that have proved very inconvenient to them.

A farther

A farther Inquiry into the Senſe of the Paſſage in Philip ii. 6, *&c. concluded from p.* 158.

HAVING already endeavoured to explain, and fix the true meaning of this phraſe, *the form of God*, which has been a ſubject of much controverſy and debate, it may be thought farther neceſſary, in order to obviate and remove any ſeeming difficulty, and give a rational and conſiſtent view of this text, that I make a little more particular inquiry into the meaning of that expreſſion, *he thought it not robbery*, *&c.*

"This phraſe, ſays Dr. Waterland, occurs not any where elſe in ſcripture, nor ſo far, ſays he, as I can find, in any profane writer (for there is a difference between αρπαγμα and αρπαγμος. Vid. *Wooton*'s Pref. ad Clem. Roman. p. 187.) So that all the light we have into it muſt be from the grammatical meaning of the word." See his fifth Sermon. Now all, I believe, will allow, that this word, wherever it may be found, whether in Heliodorus, or Plutarch, or any other Greek writers, always ſignifies one and the ſame thing, viz. *rapinam*, or rather *raptum*, *i. e.* ſomething that is ſeized as a prey, or haſtily catched at, as a valuable prize or acquiſition. So Paſor, in his Lexicon, renders this phraſe, *non rapuit equalitatem cum Deo*, and certain it is, that our bleſſed Saviour did *not think*, ουκ ηγησατο, that a likeneſs or equality with God was a thing to be *ſeized* or aſſumed by him. Though he was endued with ample powers and gifts above any other prophet, or divine meſſenger, he did not lay claim, or aſpire to any equality with his God

God and Father, who ſent him into the world to act here, as his ambaſſador and repreſentative. Though he was in the form of God, he was not greedy of being honoured, he did not inſiſt upon being worſhipped, nor did he *covet to appear*, ισα θεω, *as God*. [So Biſhop Bull, Dr. Clarke, Whitby, and others.] Or, when at any time he took upon him the *glorious* or *godlike* form, he was not fond or eager of *retaining* that form; but, on the contrary, emptied himſelf of it, taking upon him, for the moſt part, a different form or likeneſs, even that of a ſervant.

Now, *ſo far*, I think, I am pretty clear, and can freely accord with the above writers. But whether, upon the whole, they have not miſtaken the true ſenſe of the apoſtle in the paſſage before us; or whether what they have ſaid *thus far* concludes any thing at all, in favour of their own particular and diſtinguiſhing tenets, I very much queſtion; ſince they all apply, or confine, *the form of God* here, to our Saviour's ſuppoſed exiſtence and glory in a *former* ſtate, either as one co-equal with God in eſſential majeſty, perfection, and glory, or as ſome *ſuperior* exalted being, next to God in high rank and eminence, uſually, but, I think, *falſely* ſtiled, the *Logos*,* and would from hence argue or infer his wonderful condeſcenſion and great humility, in becoming incarnate, or in his voluntarily taking upon him fleſh and blood.

* See An Appendix to *The true Doctrine of the New Teſtament concerning Jeſus Chriſt conſidered*. 1767.

But,

But, for my part, I muſt, *freely*, though with great *modeſty* own, that my ſenſe of the matter, at preſent, lies thus, viz. that our Saviour, Jeſus Chriſt, was a man, a true and real man, like one of us, though eminently raiſed up, qualified and commiſſioned by God to miniſter, and act for the ſalvation and good of mankind; that ſuch was the admirable, *decorum* and *conſiſtency* of his character throughout, that he was not eager, or ambitious of exhibiting the honour and power which God had given him, any farther than was conſiſtent with his perfect obedience and ſubmiſſion to the will of his Father who ſent him; but, on the contrary, that he willingly *made void*, or emptied himſelf of his glory, by ſubmitting to the uſage, or hard treatment which ſervants, or rather ſlaves and vaſſals, and even the vileſt of the ſons of men have been wont to ſuffer and undergo. He never took upon him to be equal with God, whatever charge or accuſation of this kind might be laid againſt him by his countrymen the Jews. He affected no ſtate and grandeur, but lived, for the moſt part, in a condition of outward meanneſs and poverty, and willingly condeſcended to put himſelf upon a level with thoſe whom he came to redeem and ſave. He did not aſſume divine honours, and made no oſtentation of the power that attended him in working his miracles, but avoided all honour on that account; his great and only ambition being to appear and act as a meſſenger ſent from God, to ſupport his character and pretenſions as the Meſſiah, and to execute, with all fidelity, every

branch of the commiſſion which God had given him.

He was, indeed, the *ſon of God* in a high and peculiar ſenſe, but he did not ſeek, or affect to be like him, or equal to him in eſſential glory and majeſty. *My Father*, ſays he, *is greater than I*, John xiv. 28. He was truly the favourite of heaven, God's well-beloved ſon, and had made it ſufficiently manifeſt to the world, that he had the preſence and power of God with him in an extraordinary manner; but he was not tenacious, or fond of appearing always in the likeneſs or form of God.

Upon the whole, however the Engliſh word *robbery*, may ſound in our tranſlation, I cannot but think, that the original, αρπαγμον, or *raptum*, was deſigned by St. Paul here, to expreſs ſomething very nervous, ſtrong and emphatical. And perhaps it will *admit*, if not *require*, ſome ſuch comment as this, viz. He, that is, Jeſus, did not account, or look upon, thoſe ſuperior diſtinguiſhing powers which he exerted in the courſe of his miniſtry, and wherein he reſembled and bore the form of God, as a PREY or a BOOTY, that he himſelf had ſeized or acquired, but as a *gratuitous free-gift* or *donative*; for he expreſsly declared, not only that the doctrine which he taught, but that all his honour, and power, and great abilities were what he had received from God; and that the works which he did were the works of God, and were wrought by the power or finger of God (John xiv. 10. ch. v. 30.) And hence it is, that though he appeared in the ſight of the ſpectators, and the multitudes that

that followed him, as an extraordinary godlike perſon, by the many ſigns, wonders and miracles which God wrought by him (Acts ii. 22.) and the peculiar honours which he beſtowed upon him, yet he was far from *vaunting*, or *boaſting* of it, as perſons have been wont to do upon the account of ſome valuable *ſpoil* or *capture*, made by their military atchievements or exploits in war, to which (as it appears to me) the words of our apoſtle have a pertinent and ſtriking alluſion. Such is the comment made upon this text by Grotius and ſome others, and it is what I adopt with pleaſure.*

I would only obſerve further, that theſe three ſeveral words, *form*, *faſhion*, *likeneſs*, plainly refer to our Saviour's character and circumſtances as the promiſed Meſſiah, or to the appearance which he made in the world in purſuance of ancient prophecy.† It was here that he firſt wore

* Non venditavit iſtam poteſtatem ut, qui aliquid bellica virtute peperere, id omnibus oſtentare ſolent Grot.—Quatenus quidem homo fuit exiſtimavit, donum eſſe divinitus ſibi datum: itaque nec oſtentavit, neque mordicus retinuit, ut quidem Raptores res aliis ereptas mordicus retinere, itemque interdum etiam jactitare ſolent. Vorſt.—Chriſtus quamvis eſſet in forma Dei, hoc eſt, præditus divina gloria, tamen non duxit rapinam, ſe eſſe equalem Deo: hoc eſt, non oſtentavit illam ſuam gloriam divinam, ſicut victores ſpolia hoſtibus detracta oſtentare ſolent in triumpho; ſed gloriam illam occultavit Piſc.

† Vid Conr. Vorſtii comment in loco.—Apparet ex cohærentia ſequentis ſententiæ (ver. 7, 8.) Apoſtolum tres illas voces μορφη, ομοιωμα, σχημα, tanquam æquipollentes uſurpaſſe, id quod ex antitheſi formæ ſervilis amplius apparet. Adde quod verſio Syriaca huic expoſitioni favet,

wore the form of God, as well as the form of a ſervant. It was here that he laid aſide the one and aſſumed the other. Thus, for inſtance, when it is ſaid, that he was in *the form of God*, the meaning is, as I now ſaid, that he had the extraordinary preſence and power of God with him, as no other man ever had; or that he acted, when here on earth, in the *name* of God, and as his REPRESENTATIVE, never pretending to any equality, or aſſuming to himſelf any higher character. And when it is further ſaid, that he took upon him *the form of a ſervant*, or was made in the *likeneſs*, or found in *faſhion* as a man, it muſt import, that he was a real man, and in that nature voluntarily ſubmitted to poverty and reproach, and the ignominious death of the croſs, for us men, and for our ſalvation.

And now, having given the moſt rational and conſiſtent view of this text that I am able, there are, I apprehend, ſome reflections which will naturally ariſe from what has been ſaid, and further tend to elucidate the ſubject of this inquiry. Namely, It ſhould appear from hence, that the form of God, as I underſtand it here, muſt ſignify or intend the ſame thing with what this ſame apoſtle calls in another place, *the image of God*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. by which he evidently means the image of God in *this world*, as appears very plainly from the context, ver. 6. *For God, who commanded the light to ſhine out of dark-*

quodque Doctiores interpretes plerique aſſentiuntur. Itaque ſenſus eſt Chriſtum, cum inter homines degeret, divinam auctoritatem ac majeſtatem præ ſe tuliſſe eamque variis & ſtupendis miraculis edendis—palam retuliſſe.

neſs,

neſs, hath ſhined into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, εν προσωπω, *in the face* or perſon *of Jeſus Chriſt.* He diſplayed the moſt true and lovely image of God, in thoſe excellent doctrines which he taught in the name of God, ſuch as were highly worthy of God, and were abundantly atteſted by the bright and convincing evidence of thoſe many and wonderful works which God wrought by him. It was by him, even the man Chriſt Jeſus, that God manifeſted his truth and grace more fully to the world than he had ever done before, or under any former diſpenſation. And he is ſtill ſpeaking to us in the goſpel by his ſon, to whom he gave full power and commiſſion to ſpeak and act in his name, and by his authority. And upon this account he is ſaid, elſewhere, by an elegant and ſublime figure, to be a bright ray of his Father's glory, and the image, the expreſs image, of the inviſible God; that is, perfectly repreſenting what God is in himſelf, and what he is to us, in all his amiable moral attributes, true and faithful to all his promiſes, merciful, kind and good to all his reaſonable creatures, not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould obtain everlaſting life. Now theſe paſſages ſeem to throw mutual light upon each other, and to favour the ſenſe we have put upon the form of God: See Col. i. 15. Heb. i. 3. And the like may be ſaid of many other texts, which it is needleſs to recite.

And further. What has been ſaid will lead us to put a very eaſy and obvious ſenſe upon what immediately follows, in the former part of this paragraph (for I ſhall ſay nothing here con-

cerning our Saviour's after ſtate of exaltation and glory, ver. 9. &c.)—It is here ſaid, that our Saviour made himſelf of no reputation, ver. 7. or, as the original ſignifies, he *emptied* himſelf; and in the next verſe it is ſaid, he *humbled* himſelf (γενομενος υπηκοος) being obedient, &c. The former phraſe, though it is rather *exegetical*, or *paraphraſtical*, than a literal tranſlation, yet ſeems, in my opinion, to give* the true meaning of the original, εαυτον εκενωσε; that is, he *emptied* himſelf of his likeneſs to God by taking to himſelf the form of a ſervant; and *thus* it was, or in *this ſenſe*, that he made himſelf of no reputation: He waved all the honour, declined all the *reputation* that might accrue to him on that account, and put on another, a ſervile character and likeneſs; or he diveſted himſelf of *the form of glory*, the godlike character, making no vain oſtentation or ſhew of it, and herein he gave us a ſingular inſtance of his great humility and condeſcenſion: for the verb, εκενωσε (which is in the *active* form) is further explained in the following verſe by another word of the like import, εταπεινωσεν εαυτον,

* Hoc eſt divinam illam gloriam ac majeſtatem ſuam non modo occultavit, verum etiam quodam modo abjecit & depoſuit, cum videlicet paſſionis & mortis tempus inſtaret. Itaque vero exinanitio, id eſt ſtatus glorioſi in ſtatum humilem, vilem & abjectum commutatio hic denotatur. Nam et tempore mortalitatis ſuæ Chriſtus ſubinde glorioſus extitit Johan i. 14. ii. 11. Vorſt.—Exinanivit ſc. intelligendum eſt de maxima vitæ ipſius parte. Nam interdum gloriam illam ſuam manifeſtavit per miracula; ut per converſionem aquæ in vinum in nuptiis & alia miracula. Sed gloriâ illâ ſuâ divinâ ſe quaſi evacuavit, illam veluti depoſuit: quatenus ſcilicet eam non perpetuo manifeſtavit atque exeruit. Quod ipſum verbis ſequentibus declarat apoſtolus, ubi ait, formam ſervi ſuſcepit, &c. Piſc.

he

he humbled himſelf. *God* could not be ſaid to humble himſelf in the ſenſe wherein many perſons have here underſtood it. No; but it was the *man Chriſt Jeſus*, who is here propoſed to the chriſtians at Philippi, as a pattern or example of great and ſingular humility. He, that is, Jeſus Chriſt, actually humbled himſelf; and this he did by laying aſide, or by avoiding whatever might appear to ſavour of pride, arrogance, or vain-glory. He did not catch at reputation amongſt men, or covet any popular worldly honour and applauſe; but, on the contrary, he ſought the honour of his Father, that true, ſubſtantial and laſting *honour which cometh from God only*, John v. 41, 44. Ch. viii. 54.

And, indeed, if he had not been made in the likeneſs of men, or found in faſhion as a man, that is, had he not been a *real* man, he could not be ſaid, as here, to have been obedient, or ſubject, unto *death*, of any *kind*, or in any *ſhape*. It was not therefore as *God*, but as *man* (though a man of the higheſt name and character) that he is here ſaid to humble himſelf. Nor could he, indeed, in any other ſenſe be here recommended as an example to us, or we be exhorted to be of the ſame mind, the ſame ſpirit and diſpoſition with him, ver. 25.

Once more. There ſeems to be another remarkable paſſage parallel to this, which, in my opinion, greatly corroborates what we have already aſſerted concerning *the form of God*. See 2 Cor. viii. 9. *Ye know the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that, though he was rich, yet for your ſakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.* Now, our Saviour's being rich

muſt here intend his great and real dignity as God's anointed and only ſon, the wiſdom and knowledge with which he was repleniſhed, the almighty power of which he was poſſeſſed, and the dominion or command which he had over the various elements and powers of nature, &c. But though he was thus enriched with extraordinary and divine gifts, and greatly honoured above his fellows, *i. e.* above all former prophets, or any of the human race, he did not affect an unneceſſary diſplay of theſe gifts, or any external marks of earthly pomp and ſplendor.—He ſome times acted, indeed, in the ſight and view of thoſe that were eye-witneſſes of his great and mighty works, as more than an human perſon, or a mere man, that the divinity of his miſſion might be clear and apparent to all reaſonable and unprejudiced minds; but, at other times he appeared like an ordinary, mean, indigent, and obſcure perſon. His life on earth was, indeed, for the moſt part, a life of *humiliation*, of want, poverty, and reproach. He was abuſed and vilified in his perſon and character. He lived upon alms, and had not where to lay his head. He was a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief.

And, what we are more particularly to notice and obſerve here, is that he ſubmitted to all this *willingly* and for our *ſakes*, that we through his poverty and deep abaſement might be made rich, or be put into the way of obtaining the true riches of ſacred knowledge, wiſdom, and virtue here, and finally inherit all the riches of eternal glory and felicity in that future kingdom which

which God has promiſed to all the faithful in Chriſt Jeſus; even to all them who now ſtudy to imitate and reſemble him in humility, purity, and charity, in his voluntary obedience and ſelf-denial.

To conclude the preſent inquiry. I cannot but perceive, upon an impartial review of this text, and of many others, when compared with it, that all thoſe of every denomination, whether *Arians*, or *Athanaſians*, who have put a different ſenſe upon the language of St. Paul in this place, and of the other inſpired writers, have hitherto run into a *capital* miſtake. Scripture, when compared with ſcripture, beſt explains itſelf. And if the whole ſcripture throughout, and taken together, cannot be inconſiſtent with itſelf, or if that cannot be the true ſenſe of any one text, which evidently contradicts the *plain*, *obvious*, and *allowed* ſenſe and meaning of others (which, I am perſuaded, in the preſent caſe, are far more *numerous*) this, I ſhould think, muſt quite overbalance the ſuppoſed weight of ſome *few ſingle* texts which have been thought more *dubious* and *intricate*; though, in order to ſerve ſome favourite hypotheſis, they have often had the *greateſt ſtreſs* laid upon them.

It will be owned, I believe, on all hands, that revelation has been very much darkened by *myſterious* comments, and the ſtraining ſome particular paſſages of ſacred writ to countenance *eſtabliſhed* opinions. And the author queries, in particular, whether this text in the Philippians, when urged in proof of our Saviour's pre-exiſtence, ought not to be ranked in that number. N. B.

N. B. This inquiry may be conſidered as a ſupplement to a treatiſe entitled, *The true Doctrine of the New Teſtament concering Jeſus Chriſt, conſidered, &c.* [See p. 252.] publiſhed for Mr. Johnſon in Pater-noſter-Row, in the year 1767.

PHILELEUTHERUS VIGORNIENSIS.

Eſſays on the Harmony of the Evangeliſts, continued from p. 126.

ESSAY IV. SECTION III.

Obſervations concerning the Time of the Miſſion of the Twelve.

AS Matthew makes no mention of any appointment of the Twelve before the time when they were ſent out to preach, and both Mark and Luke expreſsly ſay, that they were called *to be with* our Lord, ſome time before, with a view to their future miſſion; I have ſupplied the defect of Matthew from thoſe other evangeliſts; and I have preferred Mark's account of the time of this event to that of Luke, becauſe, according to the latter, it preceded the ſermon on the mount, when, according to Matthew, who muſt have been the beſt informed in this caſe, he himſelf was not called to attend upon Chriſt. And as both Mark and Luke expreſsly ſay that he then choſe *twelve*, I can hardly think that he choſe no more than *eleven* at that time, and afterwards made the number twelve by the call of Matthew.

It

It will be no objection to the appointment of the Twelve at this time, that their miſſion followed ſo ſoon after; for, in fact, all the twelve, except Matthew, had actually attended Chriſt ever ſince his firſt appearance in Galilee; and as Matthew ſeems to have reſided at Capernaum, it is probable that he had both heard and ſeen much of Chriſt, and particularly that he had heard the ſermon on the mount, which was delivered in that neighbourhood.

It tends to confirm the ſuppoſition of this being the time when the apoſtles were really appointed, that *the twelve* are never mentioned in the account of any tranſaction previous to this time of their nomination, though that expreſſion doth occur afterwards, as Mark iv. 10.

I have choſen, however, to depart from the authority of Matthew, at leaſt from the preſent order of his goſpel, with reſpect to the time of the miſſion of the twelve, and the inquiry that John made concerning him, which is connected with it.

Matthew places theſe events immediately after thoſe of the day in which he himſelf was called, and before the account of the diſciples plucking the ears of corn; and conſequently a conſiderable time before our Lord's arrival at Nazareth, where Mark and Luke place it. I prefer the order of Mark and Luke for the following reaſons:

1. According to the preſent order of Matthew, the miſſion of the twelve follows the call of Matthew ſo cloſely, that it can hardly be ſuppoſed, that, ſimple as the buſineſs of their preaching

preaching then was, he could be ſufficiently inſtructed for the purpoſe of his miſſion. Indeed, according to this order, the other eleven had not been called more than a few days before, and therefore cannot be ſuppoſed to have been much better qualified; whereas, upon my hypotheſis, the twelve had been appointed, and had attended upon our Lord much longer.

2. According to the preſent order of Matthew's goſpel, Jeſus pronounces the *woe* upon Chorazin and other places in that neighbourhood, xi. 20. before he had made one half of his ſtay in Galilee for that time; whereas it is more natural to ſuppoſe, with Mark and Luke, that he pronounced it juſt before his taking leave of Galilee, in order to go to Jeruſalem, when the inhabitants of thoſe cities had had more opportunities of ſeeing his miracles, and hearing his inſtructions.

Upon the whole, I think it eaſier to ſuppoſe a tranſpoſition of thoſe parts of Matthew's goſpel, than that this evangeliſt ſhould give an account of things ſo much leſs natural and probable than Mark and Luke; and I think that ſeveral arguments may be drawn from the ſtate of Matthew's goſpel itſelf, in favour of a tranſpoſition of all that intervenes between ch. ix. 34. and the end of the eleventh chapter; and to conclude, that it was originally placed at the end of the thirteenth chapter.

3. Not the leaſt objection can ariſe to this tranſpoſition from comparing the preſent connection of the part to be tranſpoſed with the new connection, but, on the contrary, ſomething

thing in favour of it; as Jeſus's going about teaching in the cities and villages, ix. 35. and ſending out his apoſtles, ſeems more naturally to follow his being rejected at Nazareth, a country in which he had not preached before, and where he knew that his ſtay was to be very ſhort, than any thing that is related antecedent to it in the preſent arrangement.

4. The tranſpoſition is more eaſily accounted for by conſidering, that the very ſame words, *at that time* [εν εκεινω τω καιρω] follow the tranſpoſed parts, both in their preſent ſituation and in that in which I would place them. There is alſo ſomething ſimilar in the ſenſe of what precedes the preſent and the ſuppoſed place of theſe tranſpoſed parts. For, as they now ſtand, they follow the account of the unbelief of the phariſees, who aſcribed the miracles of Jeſus to the prince of devils; and where I would place them, they would follow the account of the unbelief of his own countrymen, who, becauſe they knew his family, could not conceive how he ſhould be ſo much diſtinguiſhed.

5. Matthew's account, as it now ſtands, is ſuch a contradiction to that of Mark and Luke, as one would chuſe to avoid, if it could be done without much violence to the text. Mark and Luke are expreſs in aſſerting, that the twelve returned from their miſſion on the day that Jeſus fled from Herod, and juſt before the feeding of the five thouſand. If this were ſo, it muſt be contrary to truth to repreſent the twelve as in company with our Lord in any tranſaction that intervened between their miſſion

and

and this retreat; but in this interval Matthew places the ſtory of the corn-field, and many other tranſactions, in which the diſciples (among whom, I believe it is univerſally ſuppoſed, in this caſe, that the twelve are included, if they were not principally meant) are expreſsly ſaid to have been with him.

6. Matthew himſelf ſeems to mention a return of the twelve, as after ſome ſeparation, at the time of this retreat, though not ſo particularly as Mark and Luke, Matt. xiv. 5. *And when it was even, the diſciples came unto him.* And it is the more probable that the return after their miſſion was intended, ſince Matthew makes no other mention of their return, and it is at the very ſame time preciſely which the other evangeliſts fix for their return.

7. When Jeſus fled from Herod, after the death of John, not only do Mark and Luke repreſent him as being without his diſciples, but Matthew alſo ſeems to ſuppoſe him in the ſame circumſtances; for he ſays, xiv. 12. *And when Jeſus heard it* HE *departed thence, and the people followed* HIM. But if the diſciples were with him at this time, as Matthew, according to the preſent order of his goſpel, repreſents, ſince no ſeparation is mentioned, they muſt have been with him then alſo, contrary to the expreſs aſſertion of the other evangeliſts.

8. Admitting this tranſpoſition, all the neighbouring events in the hiſtory of Jeſus have an eaſy connection, and all the three evangeliſts agree in their arrangement of them; all of them repreſenting the cure of the ſick of the palſy,

and

and the call of Matthew, as preceding the ſabbath on which the diſciples plucked the ears of corn; that about this time the twelve were appointed, and that upon our Lord's removal to Nazareth, and being rejected there, he went to preach in other cities and villages; and not having been in their neighbourhood ſince the commencement of his public miniſtry, and ſeeing great multitudes in want of inſtruction, he ſent the twelve, two and two, to preach to them. This contributed to ſpread the fame of Jeſus more than ever. John at this time ſent to inquire concerning him. Herod alſo is alarmed, and probably threatening to ſeize him and his diſciples, who were all in his territories, they all flee out of his dominions into thoſe of his brother Philip, and meet the ſame day. Upon this ſuppoſition, alſo, the woe pronounced upon Chorazin, &c. is late and ſeaſonable, as was obſerved before.

Whatever be thought of this propoſed tranſpoſition, the order of Mark and Luke is certainly much more natural and probable than the preſent order of Matthew; which conſidering that Matthew was preſent in all the tranſactions, and the other evangeliſts not, is not eaſily accaccounted for.

Section IV.

Obſervations on the Order of Events from the Miſſion of the Twelve Apoſtles to Jeſus's *triumphant Entry into Jeruſalem.*

AS Matthew connects the inquiry that John made concerning Jeſus immediately with the

the miſſion of the apoſtles, and Mark, vi. 14. connects the alarm of Herod at the miracles of Jeſus with the ſame event, it is probable that John was put to death ſoon after his ſending thoſe diſciples; and ſuppoſing that he lived till their return, he died in the fulleſt ſatisfaction concerning the miſſion of Chriſt, that himſelf or his diſciples could want. As John was thrown into priſon preſently after the paſſover, and was beheaded a little before penticoſt, it may be concluded that he lay in priſon about five weeks.

2. Luke repreſents our Lord as pronouncing the woe upon Chorazin, &c. in the hearing of the ſeventy diſciples, after giving them their inſtructions; but according to Matthew, xi. 20, it was pronounced in the hearing of the people, after the diſcourſe concerning John, when the twelve were not with him. It is not improbable but that our Lord might have uſed the ſame expreſſions more than once or twice. I have inſerted this diſcourſe where I ſuppoſe it was firſt uſed. Luke might introduce it where he has done, as being moſt pertinent on our Lord's taking his final leave of Galilee.

3. Mark ſays, vi. 45. that Jeſus ſent the diſciples by ſhip to *Bethſaida*. John ſays, vi. 17. it was *towards Capernaum*; but both thoſe places were on the ſame ſide of the lake, and not far from one another.

4. Since Matthew, Mark, and Luke omit any mention of Jeſus's going to Jeruſalem at the feaſt of pentecoſt, it ſeems probable that he went alone, and that he made no long ſtay. In the fifth chapter of John, where only we have

any

any account of this journey, it is ſaid that *Jeſus went up*, but his diſciples are not ſo much as mentioned in the whole chapter. Perhaps he did not perform that journey on foot, that he might be as little as poſſible from Galilee, to which country he ſeems to have devoted all the firſt part of the year, viz. from the paſſover to the feaſt of Tabernacles. His diſciples, if they did go to the feaſt, might travel in the ſame manner, and perhaps be diſperſed among their acquaintance in Jeruſalem.

5. From ch. ix. 51. to xviii. 14. Luke ſeems to relate what paſſed after Jeſus took his final leave of Galilee, in order to reſide chiefly in Judea, during the remainder of his miniſterial year. This appears to me ſufficiently to account for the manner in which this part of his hiſtory is introduced, *And it came to paſs when the time was come that he ſhould be received up.* If we refer theſe incidents to the feaſt of Dedication, we ſtill depart from the literal ſenſe of the words (on the moſt probable ſuppoſition, that αναλημψις means his aſcenſion to the Father, after the completion of his miniſtry) and it is impoſſible to find room for them in the hiſtory ſubſequent to his journey to Jeruſalem, at the laſt paſſover, when only the time was actually come that he ſhould be received up.

Beſides, in this part of his work, Luke ſeems to relate, without much regard to the order of time, a number of inſtructions and parables, many of which muſt have been delivered before either the ſending out, or the return of the ſeventy, mentioned x. 17. This evangeliſt,

however, ſeems to have imagined, that they were all delivered about the time of his laſt departure from Galilee to Jeruſalem.

Thoſe of theſe incidents and diſcourſes, that cannot be parallelled in Matthew, or any other evangeliſt, I thought I could not do better than throw altogether, between the feaſt of Tabernacles (at, or ſoon after which, the ſeventy probably returned) and the feaſt of Dedication.

6. The parables of the muſtard ſeed, and of the leaven, mentioned Luke xiii. 18. are related in different circumſtances by Matthew; but as they are mentioned by Luke in immediate connection with the account of our Lord's travelling towards Jeruſalem, it may be moſt adviſable to repeat them in a complete harmony.

7. There is a paſſage, parallel to that of Luke xiv. 25. concerning a man's *hating his father and mother, &c.* in Matt. xvi. 32. In Matthew, however, it is related as ſpoken to his diſciples in private, but in Luke to a great multitude.

8. The diſcourſes recorded, Matt. xix. 3. &c. appear, by their connection, to have been delivered beyond Jordan; and they alſo appear to have immediately preceded Jeſus's laſt journey to Jeruſalem. We muſt, therefore, ſuppoſe the evangeliſt omitted all that paſſed between our Lord's leaving this country to his return to it, mentioned by John only. From their introduction in Matthew and Mark, they would ſeem to have been delivered immediately upon his firſt arrival in that country from Galilee, Matt. xix. Mark x. 1. but as the concluſion of them is immediately connected with the account of his laſt

journey

journey from thence to Jeruſalem, every incident of which muſt have made the deepeſt impreſſion on their memories, I think it moſt probable that they were delivered then.

9. According to Matthew and Mark, the infants were brought to Chriſt, and the queſtion concerning eternal life was aſked beyond Jordan; but Luke xviii. 15. repreſents them as happening only in the way to Jeruſalem, without mentioning the country beyond Jordan. This evangeliſt ſeems not to have imagined that Jeſus went thither at all, in his journey from Galilee; for he only mentions his paſſing through Samaria, though he doth mention his coming to Jericho.

10. The blind man, according to Luke xviii. 35. (compared with xix. 1.) was cured before Jeſus entered Jericho, whereas Matthew ſays expreſsly, xxvi. 29. that the miracle was performed *as they departed from Jericho.* This evangeliſt, who was preſent, is moſt to be depended on.

11. The parable related in Luke xix. 11. concerning the nobleman and his ten ſervants, and that in Matthew xxv. 19. concerning the talents, very much reſemble one another; but they differ in ſeveral reſpects, and the parable in Luke is expreſsly ſaid to be delivered, *becauſe he was nigh to Jeruſalem*) perhaps in the houſe of Zaccheus) whereas the parable in Matthew was delivered after his laſt departure from the temple.

12. It ſeems more probable that our Lord's lamentation over Jeruſalem was made when he

came in view of the city, in his journey from Jericho to Bethany, than during his triumphal entry into it, as Luke repreſents. In coming to Bethany he muſt have been very near Jeruſalem, the two places being only fourteen furlongs diſtant from one another. Beſides, ſo particular a prophecy as our Lord's ſpeech upon this occaſion contains (Luke xix. 41.) ſeems more likely to have been delivered to his particular diſciples than to the mixed multitude that attended him in his triumphant entry. As no other evangeliſt, however, mentions this lamentation, it may ſeem too bold to ſet aſide the order even of Luke upon mere conjecture.

13. According to Matthew xxvi. 6. Jeſus ſupped with Simon at Bethany (at which time Mary anointed him with precious ointment) *two days* before the paſſover, after his triumphal entry into Jeruſalem, and his diſcourſes in the temple. But John xii. 1. expreſsly ſays, that this ſupper was *ſix days* before the paſſover, and alſo, xii. 12. the day before his triumphant entry. In this caſe we muſt either make the authority of Matthew yield to that of John, who is the more circumſtantial of the two, or we muſt tranſpoſe the account of Matthew; and if the verſes that contain this ſtory in Matthew xxvi. 6—13. be conſidered, they will be found to ſtand very awkwardly in their preſent ſituation, where they interrupt an account of a conſultation among the Jews about putting Jeſus to death.

It is not impoſſible, but that the ſtory might have been written by Matthew after the reſt of the hiſtory was compoſed; and, that finding his account of the journey from Jericho,

Jericho, and of the entry into Jeruſalem were ſo connected, xii. 1. that the account of this ſupper could not be inſerted between them; and not being very ſolicitous about the exact order of his narration, he, or ſome other perſon for him, put it, without much circumſpection, where it now ſtands.

It is remarkable, however, and unfavourable to this tranſpoſition, that this ſtory in Mark ſtands preciſely in the ſame connection as it doth in Matthew. It looks as if Mark, when he ſaw Matthew's goſpel, had drawn up an account of the ſame incident, and inſerted it in the ſame place in his own work.

In one reſpect the account of Matthew and Mark is more probable than that of John. It is evident that the Jews held frequent conſultations about putting Jeſus to death, particularly at the time of the reſurrection of Lazarus; but, according to all the evangeliſts, Judas was inſtigated to betray him, by the affront he conceived to be put upon him, in the obſervation our Lord made about the precious ointment at this ſupper at Bethany; and it is more probable that he ſhould keep to ſo baſe a purpoſe *two days* only, than *ſix*. It is poſſible, however, that Matthew and Mark might chuſe to introduce the account of the ſupper of Bethany, after mentioning the laſt conſultation of the Jews to kill Jeſus, and of the aſſiſtance they received from Judas, by reciting, in that place, the firſt occaſion of Judas's diſguſt, though it happened ſome time before; a thing which is very common with hiſtorians. Upon the whole, I have adhered to the account of John. Having ſeen what the other evange-

liſts had written, it may be preſumed that, where he differs from them, it was with deſign, and in order to be more exact.

14. Jeruſalem is twenty miles from Jericho, ſo that Jeſus could not ſup at Bethany and enter in triumph from Jericho the next day. The ſupper at Bethany, therefore, muſt intervene between the journey from Jericho and the entry. It is not improbable, but that he might ſpend a day or two in the family of Lazarus at that time, which might give Simon a proper opportunity of inviting him to his houſe, and making ſuitable preparation to receive him.

If we ſuppoſe that this Simon the leper was a diſciple and friend of Chriſt, which I think is rather probable (as another would hardly have riſqued the diſpleaſure of the ruling Jews ſo much, as to entertain a man who was now become ſo exceedingly obnoxious to them) and he had previous intimation of Jeſus's viſit to Bethany, and received him the very night of his arrival, we ſhall be better able to account for the miſtake of Mark, who places the purging of the temple the day after the triumphant entry; whereas it was the day after his arrival in Bethany, two contiguous dates, one of which he may be ſuppoſed to have miſtaken for the other.

SECTION V.

Obſervations on the Order of Events from the triumphant Entry into Jeruſalem to the Concluſion of the Hiſtory.

1. THE reader will perceive that I have adopted the opinion of Mr. Mann, in ſuppoſing that Chriſt purged the temple only once, and that at the laſt paſſover. His reaſons are the following:

(1) All the other evangeliſts mention this event as taking place at the laſt paſſover.

(2) Such an act of authority is not agreeable to the caution with which our Lord began his public miniſtry; being accompanied with a public declaration that he was the ſon of God, or the Meſſiah, a declaration, which, at that time, he avoided making.

(3) Such an affront to the Jewiſh prieſts could not have paſſed unnoticed, or unpuniſhed. And yet ſome time after, it appears, that neither Herod, nor many of the people had heard of Jeſus; and ſix months after this event (a year or two according to two Harmoniſts) his brethren bade him go and ſhew himſelf at Jeruſalem.

(4) If Jeſus had made this declaration, accompanied with ſo high an act of authority, at Jeruſalem, would the chief prieſts have accuſed him, as in Luke xxiii. 5. of having *begun from Galilee, to pervert the people with his doctrine?*

(5) To theſe arguments of Mr. Mann, I would add, that none of the evangeliſts give the leaſt hint of Jeſus having purged the temple

more than once, and the accounts of them all contain the very ſame particulars.

(6) The verſes that contain this account in John ii. 13—23. ſeem to have no buſineſs in the place where they now ſtand. For, take them away, and the parts they now disjoin have an eaſy connection; there being a kind of contraſt between our Lord's *diſciples only believing on him*, upon ſeeing one miracle at Cana, v. 12. and *many believing on him*, when they ſaw many miracles performed by him at Jeruſalem, mentioned v. 23.

Beſides, the hiſtorian would hardly have choſen to mention its being the paſſover twice ſo near together, as at v. 13. and 23. when there could have been no danger of any perſon having forgotten or miſtaken it.

(7) The firſt intimation that our Lord gave the Jews, that he was the Chriſt, ſeems to have been at the feaſt of pentecoſt, John v. 17. and then it inſtigated them to ſeek to ſlay him. But had he made the ſame declaration on his purging the temple before, they would hardly have been ſo much exaſperated now on that account.

(8) No objection will ariſe to this hypotheſis from the attention of the Jews being excited concerning Jeſus, and the motives of Nicodemus's application to him on account of the want of this exertion of authority; which is by ſome ſuppoſed almoſt neceſſary to account for them; for, beſides what John the Baptiſt had done, in bearing witneſs to Jeſus, and pointing him out to the people, and beſides the miracle at Cana (the fame of which doth not, indeed, ſeem

ſeem to have ſpread very far) our Lord performed many miracles at this very paſſover in Jeruſalem, and on the feaſt-day; as it is expreſsly ſaid, John ii. 23. and iv. 45.

2. What Luke repreſents our Lord as ſaying to the phariſees before he arrived at Jeruſalem, concerning the deſtruction of that city, ch. xvii. was not ſaid, according to Matthew and Mark, till after he had taken his final leave of the temple, juſt before the laſt paſſover, and was then communicated to his diſciples only, together with what is contained in the 21ſt chapter of his goſpel. I hardly think that Luke's account of the circumſtances of this remarkable prophecy, or of his prophetical declarations on his public entry into Jeruſalem, are agreeable to the uſual caution and reſerve of our Saviour in thoſe reſpects. However, the ſentiments in Matthew and Luke are ſo much the ſame, that, in compiling a harmony, I ſhould chuſe to place them together, that they might be more eaſily compared.

3. Our Lord's ſaying to the Jews, *Ye ſhall not ſee me till ye ſay, Bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*, Luke xiii. 35. ſuppoſes to have been pronounced by him in Galilee, before he arrived at Jeruſalem; but Matthew, xxiii. 39. ſuppoſes that theſe words were pronounced in the temple, after his triumphant entry.

4. Matthew deſcribes Chriſt's purging the temple as performed on the very day of his triumphant entry into Jeruſalem, before he curſed the fig-tree. But, according to Mark, xi. 15. he only *looked about upon all things*, when he

he firſt viſited the temple, and, it being even, he went to Bethany; from whence returning, in the morning, he curſed the fig-tree, and then, on the ſecond day of his viſiting the temple, he purged it.

5. The diſcourſes recorded in John xii. 20. &c. ſeem not to have been delivered on the day that he firſt entered the temple, and purged it. The Greeks had probably heard of that extraordinary action, and were thereby the more induced to make inquiry concerning him. And the diſcourſes that follow concerning his miſſion ſeem very properly to precede thoſe aweful parables that relate to the rejection of chriſtianity by the Jews, and that are recorded in Matthew and the other evangeliſts.

6. Luke xxii. 21. repreſents Jeſus diſcovering Judas's purpoſe to betray him after the inſtitution of the Lord's ſupper, and therefore ſuppoſes him to have been preſent at it; whereas all the other evangeliſts repreſent that diſcovery as made prior to the inſtitution, and therefore ſuppoſe him not to have been preſent at it. But on this ſubject I refer your readers to what Paulinus has advanced, vol. I. p. 141.

7. It is not eaſy to fix the time when Jeſus foretold Peter's denial of him. Matthew ſays, xxvi. 31. that it was after they had ſet out to go to the mount of Olives; and Mark, xiv. 26. relates the facts exactly in the ſame order. But according to Luke, xxii. 31—39. the diſcourſe concerning Peter's denial of him was previous to their going to the mount of Olives; and John relates the diſcourſe concerning Peter and ſeveral

ral others, before he ſays, xiv. 31. *Ariſe, let us go hence.* John is ſo very circumſtantial in relating all the tranſactions towards the cloſe of our Lord's hiſtory, that I prefer his account, though it is not favoured by Matthew.

Some ſuppoſe that, notwithſtanding the words of John, laſt quoted, our Lord did not leave the place where he ſpake them; becauſe in xviii. 1. it is ſaid, that *when he had ſpoken theſe words, viz.* the prayer for his diſciples, &c. he *went with his diſciples over the brook Cedron.* But I do not ſee for what purpoſe the evangeliſt would have mentioned our Lord's ſaying, *Ariſe, let us go hence,* if they had not actually gone; and I ſee no difficulty in ſuppoſing, that, as it was night, probably very ſtill, and certainly moonlight, Jeſus might diſcourſe as he went along, at leaſt that he might ſtop at ſome place without the town, and before he went over the brook.

LIBERIUS.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

IF the bleſſed God ſhould be pleaſed to vouchſafe to ſinners a revelation of his will, we have ſufficient reaſon to conclude, from our natural notions of his wiſdom and goodneſs, and of his love to his creatures, that it will, and muſt be ſuch as is every way moſt worthy of its author, and conducive to promote their preſent and future happineſs. Hence it muſt be

eaſy

eaſy and plain to perſons of the meaneſt capacity; and they cannot fail to reap the greateſt advantages from it; provided they read it with a humble and docile temper; with thankfulneſs to God for it, and with earneſt prayer for his bleſſing upon their peruſal of it, to obſerve its beauties, and to promote the grand end of its publication.

This, I apprehend, to be the caſe in all things eſſentially neceſſary to our ſalvation. But yet it is neither inconſiſtent with God's wiſdom nor goodneſs, that there ſhould be in this revelation *ſome things hard to be underſtood*; and which the bulk of mankind have neither genius, learning, nor time to inveſtigate. And among other reaſons why there ſhould be δυσνοητα τινα, in a revelation of God's will to mankind, may be the two following; to exerciſe, and find employment for, the reaſonable powers he hath conferred upon us; and then to make room for the uſe and improvement of that amiable grace, *brotherly-love*, and *mutual charity*; which, to the great reproach of profeſſors, lies neglected, nay even ſlighted, by too many chriſtians of almoſt every denomination.

Among ſome other parts of ſcripture, theſe words of the apoſtle, 1 Cor. ix. 17—18. appear to carry in them no ſmall difficulty. And the reaſon why I trouble you, gentlemen, with this letter, is, to deſire the favour of Vigilius's remarks upon them. With regard to ſome other texts, he hath diſcovered a maſterly genius in criticiſm; and I doubt not, he will give univerſal ſatisfaction, while

while he comments on theſe words of the apoſtle.

"For if I do this thing, preach the goſpel, willingly, εκων, I have a reward; but if unwillingly, ακων, I am entruſted with a diſpenſation of the goſpel, what is my reward then? Verily, that when I preach the goſpel, I may make the goſpel of Chriſt without charge, that I abuſe not my power in the goſpel."

I have ſometimes thought, that if theſe words, "but if unwillingly, I am entruſted with a diſ-"penſation of the goſpel," could be brought in by way of parentheſis, then the beginning of both verſes would be quite eaſy and natural. But though I have obſerved a difficulty in them, yet, it may be, few of your readers have ſeen any. Give me leave, however, for their ſake, as well as for my own, to deſire that you would be kind enough to communicate this letter to Vigilius. It may be, he will not think the words referred to undeſerving notice. And if he does not, and is pleaſed to lay before the public his thoughts upon them in your next Repoſitory; it will, I aſſure you, gentleman, be eſteemed as a ſingular favour, by his, and your moſt humble ſervant,

CORNELIUS.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

Your correſpondent Cornelius, *pays* Vigilius *too high a compliment; however, that he may correſpond in ſome meaſure to the friendly regards he expreſſes for him, he ſcruples not to ſubmit his ſentiments of the paſſage in queſtion to his candid judgment.*

1 Cor. ix. 15—18.

IN this paſſage the apoſtle explains the principle he had acted upon, and the conduct he had obſerved in preaching the goſpel, particularly among the Corinthians, by a beautiful alluſion to the well known condition, temper, and practice of ſervants, or ſlaves, at that time. It is an idea he ſeems to be very fond of, and he enlarges upon it with pleaſure, when he has occaſion to ſpeak of the relation in which he ſtood to his great Lord and Maſter, as a miniſter of the goſpel.

Many of the ſlaves had been captives taken in war, and afterward led in chains at the triumphant return of the victorious general and army, and eſpecially at their entry into the capital. So the apoſtle often ſpeaketh with ſhame and ſorrow of the violent hoſtilities he had committed againſt Chriſt, the goſpel, and its profeſſors; and in one place (2 Cor. ii. 14.) he ſays, *Now thanks be unto God,* τω παντοτε θριαμβευοντι ημας

(not,

(not, *who always cauſeth us to triumph*, but)* *who always triumpheth over us in Chriſt, i. e.* continually leadeth us about from place to place, as it were, in triumph, employing us in the ſervice of the goſpel, to diſplay the completeneſs of his victory over us. He had juſt mentioned his coming to Troas to preach the goſpel, and (notwithſtanding the fair proſpect of ſucceſs which opened there) the ſolicitude with which he had paſſed over from thence to Macedonia for the ſame purpoſe. It is further obſervable, that θριαμβευσας αυτους, in Coloſ. ii. 15. is rendered by our verſion, *triumphing over them.*

When the ſlaves were diſpoſed of to their ſeveral maſters, they had diſtinct offices and ſervices appointed to them in their family or affairs, which they were obliged to diſcharge and perform on penalty of ſevere puniſhment; at the ſame time, a certain portion of food, and other neceſſaries for their ſubſiſtance, was allotted them, and ſuch other privileges and indulgences as their maſters might think proper to grant.

Now, among theſe ſlaves, many would prove ακοντες, *unwilling*, of a reluctant and ſullen temper; who would, indeed, perform the duties of their office, but only according to the moſt confined and ſtrict meaning of the injunction laid upon them, merely to eſcape puniſhment; having no good will, either to their maſter, or his ſervice; at the ſame time, making full uſe of every allowance, whatever detriment might

* Vid. Brekell's Grounds and Principles of the Chriſtian Religion, Diſ. vii. p. 141.

ariſe

ariſe from it to their maſter's intereſts or affairs. Theſe could have no καυχημα, no claim to ſpecial favour or reward from their maſter for ſuch ſervice; but, as our Lord ſaid (probably in alluſion to the ſame circumſtances) after they had done all thoſe things which were commanded them, they were to be accounted *infrugi homines*, unprofitable ſervants, who had only done that which was their duty to do.

Others, who were of a more liberal and elevated temper, would endeavour to ſhew themſelves εκοντες, willing, forward, and cheerful ſervants; not confining themſelves within the ſtrict boundaries of the duties of their office, they would exert their beſt abilities to promote their maſter's intereſts by extraordinary ſervices, or diligence, and even by foregoing the conveniences allowed them, when they could thereby more effectually advance their maſter's affairs. Theſe things would furniſh them with a juſt plea for ſpecial favour and reward from their maſter; and ſuch a ſervant might well boaſt, as Davus in Horace,

——*Amicum*
Mancipium domino, & frugi, quod ſit ſatis.
Lib. ii. Sat. 7.

In the paſſage before us the apoſtle ſeems to allude to moſt, or all of theſe particulars. Having aſſerted, in the former part of the chapter, that, as an apoſtle and preacher of the goſpel, he had a rightful claim to certain privileges, which other apoſtles enjoyed; particularly, of being ſupported by the churches to which he miniſtered; and having proved this right by the

the principles of an equitable requital for uſeful ſervices, even of the laborious animals, which was commanded by the law; by the example of the miniſters of the temple, who ſhared in the offerings made at the altar; and by the expreſs ordinance of the Lord himſelf, who ſaid, *The workman is worthy of his meat*, i. e. *they which preach the goſpel ſhould live of the goſpel*, v. 14. he adds, v. 15. *But I have uſed none of theſe things:* when I preached the goſpel among you, I inſiſted on none of theſe privileges; being convinced, that by foregoing them I could more effectually promote my maſter's ſervice with you; *neither have I written theſe things, that it ſhould be ſo done unto me*; *i. e.* that theſe privileges ſhould be allowed me hereafter, when I ſhall come again amongſt you; becauſe I have already experienced the good effects of this ſelf-denial; and, *it were better for me to die, than that any man ſhould make my glorying void, i. e.* ſhould deprive me of this plea for ſpecial favour and reward from my maſter; v. 16. *For though I preach the goſpel*, this is no voluntary ſervice, no free-will offering in me. I am Chriſt's captive ſlave, and this is the ſervice he hath required from me. In barely preaching the goſpel *I have nothing to glory*; no plea for ſpecial favour and reward; *neceſſity is laid upon me*; it is my bounden duty, *yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the goſpel.* I ſhall deſerve ſevere puniſhment, like the wicked and ſlothful ſervant, who neglects the duties of the office to which he is appointed, v. 17. *For if I do this thing, i. e.* preach the goſpel *willingly*, εκων, with affection to my

maſter and zeal for his ſervice, like *amicum mancipium domino, & frugi, I have a reward.* I am ſecure of obtaining one from my maſter; *but if againſt my will,* ακων, regardleſs of the ſucceſs of my labour, and unconcerned about my maſter's intereſt, like a ſullen ſlave, who only aims at eſcaping puniſhment by barely doing what is required, *a diſpenſation is committed to me,* οικονομιαν πεπιςευμαι, I am charged with an office which I muſt, at my peril, fulfil. Ver. 18. *What is my reward then?* What ground have I to hope to obtain any marks of my maſter's ſpecial approbation and favour? Not by barely preaching the goſpel, for that is my neceſſary duty, and the ſervice enjoined me; but from the favourable circumſtances and manner in which I ſtudy, and endeavour, to preach it. *Verily, that when I preach the goſpel, I may make the goſpel of Chriſt without charge, that I abuſe not my power in the goſpel.* For by thus foregoing the privileges I might have claimed, and which my maſter himſelf hath allowed me, with a view more effectually to promote the intereſts of the goſpel, and thereby voluntarily ſubjecting myſelf to extraordinary difficulties for his ſake, I ſhall certainly approve my affection and zeal to him, and obtain a ſuitable reward from him. In the following verſes he proceeds to ſhew with what aſſiduity and care he had, on other occaſions, employed every method, which prudence directed, to favour the propagation of the goſpel; laying aſide all regard to his own eaſe or convenience, *that he might gain the more to the belief* and profeſſion

profeſſion of it, and become himſelf *a joint partaker with them* of the bleſſings of it, v. 23.

I hope it will by this time appear to Cornelius, that there is no need to make any alteration in the text of this paſſage; but that the ſentiment contained in it is beautiful, and the form of expreſſion claſſically elegant.

VIGILIUS.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

If no other of your correſpondents have ſuggeſted any thing better on the ſubject, I ſubmit to your judgment the following attempt to juſtify our continuing to obſerve the inſtitution of the Lord's Supper, *in reply to the objections of* J. B. *in your laſt Number. If you think the remarks may contribute to remove his difficulties in relation to that ordinance, they are offered with the utmoſt candor and good-will to his conſideration, by*

Your friend and ſervant,

EUSEBIUS.

IT ought, I think, to be carefully obſerved, that our Lord ſupported, not a private character only, but, chiefly, a public one; that he was ſent of God to promulgate a divine diſpenſation of religion to mankind; to deliver doctrines of univerſal concern, to enjoin laws of univerſal obligation, and ſupport them with ſanctions, in which all men are intereſted.

It ſeems neceſſary to attend to this diſtinction, in order to underſtand properly many things recorded of him. A private perſon may be ſuppoſed to attend only, or chiefly, to his own private intereſt, or the particular concerns of the little circle of his dependants and friends; and, if he give any directions, they are underſtood to extend no farther than to the individuals to whom they are given, unleſs he expreſsly declare an intention, that others alſo ſhould be included; but one who ſupports the public character of a law-giver, or teacher, eſpecially in the extent that Jeſus ſuſtained it, poſſeſſeth a more diffuſive authority, and all his directions muſt be underſtood to convey a general obligation, as far as that authority extends; unleſs he himſelf ſee fit ſome way to limit them; or ſomewhat in the nature of the things or circumſtances of the injunction limits them. Accordingly all the declarations and precepts of Jeſus Chriſt, tho' directly addreſſed by him only to his immediate diſciples, or the audiences which happened to attend him, are reaſonably conſidered by all chriſtians, as commanding the regards and obedience of all his followers in all ages, except only thoſe which he himſelf expreſsly limited, or which the nature of things, the peculiar circumſtances of perſons, or of thoſe times oblige us to underſtand as temporary or of peculiar obligation. Such are many of the directions which he gave to his diſciples, whom he ſent forth to preach the goſpel before him in Galilee and Judea, and ſeveral others ſimilar to them.

By

By his general declarations and precepts, I do not mean only his moral precepts and declarations, founded on the common nature and reaſon of things; but alſo ſuch general declarations and precepts as are peculiar to himſelf and his religion. Thus, for inſtance, the directions and promiſes he delivered concerning offering prayers to God in the name of Chriſt, though addreſſed directly to his immediate followers, without any expreſs mention made of his future diſciples, yet have been underſtood by all chriſtians, as obligatory on themſelves, and a ſufficient foundation for their practice.

I might illuſtrate what I have ſuggeſted, concerning the univerſal obligation of injunctions, not limited in the delivery, or by the nature of things, or any attending circumſtances (which is derived from the public character of the deliverer, though addreſſed to particular perſons only) from the well-known practice of the Roman law. The imperial edicts were commonly drawn up in the form of letters, addreſſed, either to the commander of the emperor's guards, or ſome particular governor of a province; yet, unleſs there was an expreſs limitation in them, or any peculiar circumſtance of times, perſons, or things, that confined them, they were conſidered as general laws of the empire, by which all magiſtrates were obliged to regulate their proceedings, and all ſubjects were bound to obedience.

Now that our Lord, when he enjoined this inſtitution in remembrance of himſelf, did not

expreſsly limit the obligation, by ſaying, *My intention is, that this memorial be obſerved by ſuch and ſuch perſons, and until ſuch a time only*, or any thing like it, is very certain; and that there is nothing in the nature, or any circumſtance of the injunction that renders it peculiarly proper, or any way limits it to the perſons or times then preſent, or which immediately ſucceeded; but that every thing in it is equally proper and ſuitable for all chriſtians in all times, will perhaps appear when we conſider the particulars.

It is very true, that he doth not expreſsly ſay, *My intention is, that not you only, but all, who ſhall hereafter believe in me and profeſs my goſpel, ſhall, in all ſucceeding ages and in all places, obſerve this inſtitution*; neither was ſuch a clauſe at all neceſſary; becauſe the univerſal obligation is included in that public character of teacher and law-giver to mankind, with which he was inveſted by God the Father, and which he demonſtrated to the world; and there are many others of his precepts, which, though they have no ſuch clauſe annexed, yet we all receive, and own their obligation upon ourſelves on this account.

I would add, that as our Lord did ſometimes, though not often, declare his intention, that the precepts he delivered ſhould be underſtood as obligatory on all his diſciples, in ſuch terms as theſe, *What I ſay unto you, I ſay unto all*; ſo that he had, at this time, a regard to his future diſciples appears to me very probable, from that admirable prayer to his Father with which he concluded the diſcourſes to his diſciples immediately

ately after he had inſtituted this memorial of himſelf. In which prayer we find theſe memorable words, John xvii. 20, &c. *Neither pray I for theſe alone, but for them alſo which ſhall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they alſo may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou haſt ſent me. And the glory which thou haſt given me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou haſt ſent me, and haſt loved them as thou haſt loved me. Father, I will, that they alſo, whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou haſt given me.*

Now, can we read attentively theſe interceſſions of our bleſſed Saviour, for ourſelves, and for all our fellow-chriſtians, in all times and places, offered up to his Father immediately after he had inſtituted this memorial of himſelf (in which interceſſions he ſo earneſtly petitions for us unanimity among ourſelves, union with the Father and the Son, perfection in all chriſtian graces, and everlaſting communion and happineſs with himſelf in heaven; partly as a further convincing evidence to the world of our maſter's divine miſſion, and partly as an illuſtration of the bleſſings deſigned for mankind by the goſpel) and can we imagine, that he did not think of us, when he, juſt before, inſtituted this ordinance; or that he did not mean it for our obſervance and advantage, and of all other our fellow-chriſtians: eſpecially, if it appear, that the

inſtitution itſelf, when rightly underſtood, and properly obſerved, is well calculated to promote the glorious purpoſes which are the ſubjects of theſe petitions. Certainly, the bleſſed Jeſus always manifeſted a more comprehenſive turn of mind, and a more extenſive benevolence, than to confine to a *few*, any benefit which was communicable unto *many*—unto *all*.

I ſhall now proceed to inquire, whether there be any thing in the general deſign of the inſtitution of the Lord's Supper, or in any part of it that appropriates it to our Lord's immediate diſciples, or to the Jewiſh converts in the firſt age; or whether it doth not appear, from what we are told, both of its general deſign, and of the intention of each particular part, that it is, at leaſt equally proper and expedient to be obſerved by all the followers of Chriſt in all times and places.

I ſuppoſe it will be allowed as a very juſt maxim, that a declaration of the reaſon and purpoſe of any law, ought to determine our opinion of the legiſlator's intention with reſpect to the extent of its obligation, as well as to be a rule whereby to interpret its ſenſe, and regulate the ſubject's obedience. If the declared reaſon and end of a law be *particular*, *i. e.* ſuitable only to the caſes of a few perſons, it is reaſonable to conclude, that the legiſlator intended thoſe only to be bound by it, whoſe caſes it ſuits; but if the reaſon and ends of it be *univerſal*, *i. e.* equally proper and applicable to all perſons, then, certainly, we muſt conclude that he meant *all* ſhould obſerve it, ſo far as his authority extends.

It

It is according to this principle that the ſtatute laws of our own country are interpreted and applied.

The general deſign for which our Lord appointed this inſtitution appears, from his expreſs declaration, to have been for a memorial of himſelf: to keep up a freſh remembrance of him, by a frequent ſerious recollection, upon the minds of thoſe who ſhould obſerve it. Now let me aſk; Was this any way peculiar to the apoſtles, or firſt Jewiſh converts? Was it a duty proper to them only? Or was the practice of a frequent ſerious recollection, and renewal of the remembrance of their maſter ſuitable to their caſe and circumſtances alone? Is it not equally expedient for all chriſtians whatever, frequently to recollect, meditate, and keep in freſh and efficacious remembrance, what they have been taught concerning their maſter? And if there be an inſtitution peculiarly adapted to aſſiſt them for this purpoſe, is it not equally reaſonable that they all ſhould obſerve it, and take the benefit of it?

There ſeems to be even greater reaſon and neceſſity for chriſtians in ſucceeding ages to do this, than for the apoſtles and early Jewiſh converts, to whom this inſtitution was delivered; becauſe the impreſſions relative to the Lord Jeſus, made on *our* minds, by reading and meditation on the goſpel narratives concerning him, muſt needs be much more faint and imperfect, and, conſequently, much more eaſily obliterated, than thoſe which muſt have been imprinted deep on *theirs*, who had ſo long, and ſo conſtantly ſeen him, converſed with him, beheld his miracles,

cles, been witneſſes of his behaviour, had all their difficulties reſolved by him, attended his ſufferings, and converſed intimately with him after his reſurrection; or at leaſt, had been inſtructed in every thing concerning him by thoſe who had been eye-witneſſes of the whole, and had ſeen their teſtimony confirmed by many wonderful miracles, which they wrought in his name, and had themſelves received the miraculous gifts and powers of the Holy Ghoſt. One would imagine, that *they* could not poſſibly forget him, or forbear to think of him long together. Our attention to him muſt alſo be much more eaſily diverted by the avocations of worldly buſineſs, and the conſtant ſolicitations of foreign ideas, than theirs could be, whoſe whole employment was to propagate his goſpel, and ſpread the knowledge of him through the world.

Beſides; what *kind* of remembrance muſt we ſuppoſe our Lord meant, when he ſaid, Do this in remembrance of me? Was it only a remembrance of the peculiarities of his countenance, perſon, geſture, and manner of external behaviour. If this were what he meant, it would be certain, indeed, that this obſervance muſt have been peculiar to thoſe who had ſeen and converſed with him, for they only could retain a remembrance of theſe particulars: but then, it is equally certain, that this would have been far beneath him, indeed unworthy of any wiſe or great mind, to be concerned about a remembrance of ſuch things: and therefore we may be aſſured that this was not his meaning.

His

His apoſtles were very ſenſible of it; and therefore St. Paul ſays, 2 Cor. v. 16. *Henceforth know we no man after the fleſh, i. e.* ſo as to be prejudiced by a trifling admiration of men's perſons, as weak and inconſiderate people are apt to be. *Yea, though we have known Chriſt after the fleſh,* have had opportunities of obſerving the peculiarities of his perſon, *yet, now henceforth know we him no more, i. e.* (if I miſtake not) we conſider it as a matter of ſmall importance to recollect the external figure and manner even of that Holy One of God. Our regards are fixed on his character and doctrines, on our connections with him, and expectations from him; that we may form ourſelves on his example, obey his injunctions, approve our fidelity to him, and obtain ſalvation by him. He immediately adds, ver. 17. *Therefore, if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature,* entirely new formed, under his influences, unto all good works.

Now, if our Lord intended this inſtitution to be a *memorial,* to keep up a remembrance, not of his perſon, but of his character, ſpirit and conduct; of his doctrines, precepts and promiſes; of our relation to him and dependence on him, as his diſciples; of what he did and ſuffered, in cheerful obedience to God, and out of good-will to men; let me aſk, Are not all chriſtians concerned in theſe things? Are not *we all* obliged to frequent remembrance and meditation on the pattern, doctrines, promiſes, and ſufferings of our common Maſter and Lord, that we may keep his commandments, and copy his example, in order that we may obtain the ſalvation he hath promiſed? To what other purpoſe are the records

records of all theſe things given us in the goſpels? Doth not John mean to addreſs himſelf to all chriſtians without exception, into whoſe hands his writings ſhould at any time come, in thoſe words, ch. xx. 31. *Theſe are written, that ye might believe, that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the ſon of God, and that, believing, ye might have life through his name.*

If, therefore, the life, practice, doctrines, precepts, promiſes, miracles, and ſufferings of Chriſt do really concern all chriſtians, without exception; and if chriſtians are intimately intereſted to form their own ſentiments, tempers, practice and expectations upon them, and, to this end, to recollect and meditate on theſe ſubjects, often and ſeriouſly; and if our Lord inſtituted a particular obſervance purpoſely to aſſiſt in reviving the remembrance of theſe things, and impreſſing them deep on men's hearts; is it not clear, that he muſt have meant alſo, that all his followers ſhould attend upon, and improve by this inſtitution? To me, at leaſt, it appears very clear.

If, then, the general deſign of this inſtitution, according as our Lord himſelf explains it, hath nothing peculiar, or appropriated to the apoſtles, or the firſt converts from among the Jews, which may induce one to think that he meant it for their obſervance only; if it appear to be univerſal, equally applicable to the caſes of all chriſtians, and therefore proper to be obſerved by all, which gives us ground to conclude that he intended it to be ſo obſerved; let us proceed to conſider the two conſtituent parts of the inſtitution, with what our Saviour ſaith of each,

and

and ſee whether any thing of a peculiar and appropriate nature offers itſelf in either.

Firſt, we are told, that *Jeſus took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave to his diſciples, ſaying, Take, eat; this is, i. e.* repreſents, or is deſigned to be a memorial of *my body, which is broken for you.* Let me aſk here, for whom was the body of Chriſt broken, *i. e.* wounded and mangled unto death in that manner in which, we learn, he ſuffered on the croſs? Was it for the twelve apoſtles, and the firſt Jewiſh converts only? certainly, no. Was it not broken for us all? The apoſtle ſays, that *Chriſt died for all men*; and adds, that *he died for them, that they ſhould henceforth live, not unto themſelves, but unto him that died for them and roſe again.* Now whatever ſentiments we may entertain concerning the purpoſes anſwered by the death of Chriſt, according to the divine plan of redemption of the world, we ſhall all own, that we are obliged to live not unto ourſelves, or according to our own imaginations and luſts, but in obedience to his commands, and in dependence for ſalvation on his promiſes who died for us and roſe again. And thus far, I apprehend, we all ſhall agree, alſo, in the purpoſes for which Chriſt's body was broken for us; that, in reward of his perfect obedience even unto death, God the Father hath raiſed him up, and exalted him to his own right hand, and made him a prince and a ſaviour for all men, to give repentance and remiſſion of ſins, having authorized him to publiſh the goſpel of ſalvation unto all men, by the preaching of his apoſtles and miniſters among all nations; that, in conſequence of his being lifted up on the

the croſs, he draweth all men to him; that through the happy fruits of his death we, of the Gentiles, are called to the knowledge and into the kingdom of God, are taken to be of his people, and have received the adoption of his children, enjoy at preſent all the privileges of ſuch, and are taught to rejoice in the hope of an eternal inheritance. In fact, therefore, Chriſt's body was broken for us, for our benefit and advantage, and we do now enjoy exceeding great privileges, and have glorious hopes ſet before us, as the fruit of it. Whilſt, therefore, we, of the Gentiles, profeſſing ourſelves the diſciples of Chriſt, and reſcued by him from the ignorance, idolatry, and vices of our anceſtors, aſſemble ourſelves, in the name of Chriſt, to worſhip the one true God, the Creator and Lord of the univerſe, whom our fathers knew not, with the rational and pure devotion of our hearts, of which they had no conception; and this as the fruit of the death, and conſequent exaltation, and univerſal government of Chriſt; if there be an inſtitution appointed by Chriſt purpoſely to keep up a freſh remembrance of his ſufferings and death, who can be more fit to obſerve it than we? Where can it be more properly or reaſonably celebrated than in our religious aſſemblies? For whom did Chriſt die more than for us; or who reaps greater benefits from his death than we? Did the apoſtles, or early Jewiſh converts? No: Chriſt died for us as well as for them, and he is as much our Saviour as he was their's. Nay, in one reſpect we ſeem to be more intereſted in his death than they

they were; for before his death they were of the people of God, and enjoyed the benefits of the covenant made with Abraham; but had it not been for his death we ſhould not have been of the people of God; we ſhould ſtill have remained *far off, who are now made nigh* unto him by the death of Chriſt; we ſhould ſtill have been *ſtrangers and foreigners*, whereas we are now *fellow-citizens with the ſaints and of the houſehold of God.* Doth not then the propriety, I had almoſt ſaid, the peculiar propriety, that we ſhould always retain a moſt freſh and grateful remembrance of the death of Chriſt, on account of the ſignal benefits we all actually enjoy, as the fruit and effect of his death, convince us, that none could, with greater reaſon, obſerve an inſtitution purpoſely appointed to commemorate that event, and that our Lord could not mean to limit the obligation to obſerve ſuch an inſtitution to a few particulars, who had only a common ſhare in it, and for a ſhort ſeaſon, though the declared purpoſe is univerſal and perpetual? When, therefore, he ſaid, *This is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me*, he muſt certainly have meant to require all his followers, in all times and places (for all of whom his body was broken) to obſerve this inſtitution, and *us* in particular.

Secondly; we are alſo told, that our Lord next took a cup, and having given thanks he delivered it to his diſciples, ſaying, *Drink ye all of it; this cup is, i. e.* repreſents or is an emblem of *the New Teſtament*, or diſpenſation, *in my blood:* or as it is in Matthew; *This is my*

blood

blood of the New Teſtament, which is ſhed for many for the remiſſion of ſins. By the New Teſtament, or diſpenſation, I apprehend, he means the new declaration of God's good will, revealed unto the world in the goſpel, which was authenticated and confirmed by means of Chriſt's voluntarily ſhedding his own blood, or laying down his life on the croſs; in reward whereof he was authorized and empowered to execute thoſe declarations of mercy and favour, which the Father had commiſſioned him to make unto the world.

Now, let me aſk again; To whom hath the new diſpenſation of God's good-will been revealed by the goſpel, and to whom was it ratified by the blood of Chriſt? Was it to the apoſtles and the firſt Jewiſh believers only? Have the reſt of us chriſtians, in ſucceeding ages, no intereſt or concern in it? Yes; God be praiſed, we all have. *God is in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. In him we have redemption, through his blood, even the forgiveneſs of ſins, according to the riches of his grace.* If, therefore, the goſpel-declarations of God's grace are univerſal, *bringing ſalvation to all men*; if this part of the inſtitution of the Lord's ſupper now under conſideration, is expreſsly declared, by the inſtitutor, to be intended for a memorial, or emblematical exhibition of the new diſpenſation of divine grace or favour, offered in the goſpel, as confirmed by the blood of Chriſt; what reaſon can there be to ſuppoſe he did not mean that this memorial

ſhould

ſhould be obſerved by all chriſtians, but only by a few, who had no more than a common intereſt in it with the reſt?

One would think that every chriſtian who has juſt ſentiments of the nature and extent of the grace, or good-will of God revealed in the goſpel, and is informed, that the perſon who confirmed this diſpenſation of it by ſhedding his blood, and who is himſelf intruſted with the accompliſhment of all the promiſes of it, hath appointed a memorial, or ſignificant emblem of this diſpenſation to be obſerved, *by ſome* for the frequent remembrance of it, would wiſh, at leaſt, that himſelf might be permitted to partake in ſuch a ſervice, for the confirmation of his own faith, comfort, and joy in the aſſurance of the good-will of God, For ſuch an inſtitution, appointed by ſuch a perſon, ſeems plainly to import an aſſurance and tender of all the offers of the goſpel, to each individual who ſeriouſly partakes in that ſervice.

Again: Our Lord ſays, *This* cup *is*, or repreſents *my blood—which is ſhed for many for the remiſſion of ſins.* For the remiſſion of whoſe ſins was Chriſt's blood ſhed? Not of the apoſtles and firſt believers only; it was ſhed for *many* for the remiſſion of ſins. And after his reſurrection, he ſhewed to his diſciples, that according to the principles of divine revelation given unto the prophets, *It behoved Chriſt to ſuffer, and to riſe from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and remiſſion of ſins might be preached in his name unto all nations.* Accordingly he ſent Paul to the Gentiles, *to open their eyes,*

and to turn them from darkneſs unto light, that they might receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and an inheritance among all them that are ſanctified, by faith in him. And St. John ſays, *He is a propitiation for our ſins, and not for ours only, but alſo for the ſins of the whole world.* If, then, the blood of Chriſt was ſhed for the remiſſion of the ſins of all men, who are willing to perform that repentance which the goſpel every where demands, and makes the indiſpenſable pre-requiſite for obtaining forgiveneſs; and if Chriſt inſtituted a memorial purpoſely for a remembrance of his blood, ſhed for the remiſſion of ſins, doth it not ſeem reaſonable again to conclude it to have been his intention, that this memorial ſhould be obſerved by all who believe the goſpel, are deſirous to obtain remiſſion of ſins, and willing to perform the requiſite condition of repentance?

Thus we have conſidered what our Lord declares, both concerning the general deſign of this inſtitution, and the particular purpoſe of each part; and, on the whole, there doth not appear to me the leaſt trace of any thing peculiar, or appropriate to the caſe of the apoſtles, or Jewiſh converts of that time; but every thing he ſaid is of univerſal import, and ſuitable to all chriſtians in all times and places. Theſe, I think, are the proper principles whereby to judge of the intentions of this great teacher and law-giver, whom God ſent to declare his will to the world, and how far the obligation of his injunction extends.

What then may we reaſonably conclude upon the whole, unleſs, that as he choſe to expreſs himſelf

himſelf in ſuch terms as theſe, which we find he uſed at the inſtitution of this ordinance, he certainly meant, that all who believe in him ſhould be careful to obſerve it according to his appointment, and for the purpoſe which he declared to be his intention; in which purpoſes they all have an equal intereſt.

Let us now go on to inquire, What were the ſentiments and practice of the apoſtles who received this inſtitution from their maſter, and in what light they conſidered his intentions as to the extent of its obligation.

If we look into the ſecond chapter of the book of Acts, we find, that they had no ſooner received the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, and become thereby empowered to propagate the goſpel, but they taught their converts to obſerve this inſtitution, as an indiſpenſable duty of chriſtianity. For we are told, v. 42. that the new converts *continued ſteadfaſtly in the apoſtles' doctrine and fellowſhip, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer.* And, v. 46. *They continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from houſe to houſe* (or *at home*; ſee the margin) *did eat their meat with gladneſs and ſingleneſs of heart.* We cannot underſtand by breaking bread, in either place, partaking of ordinary food; for, in the former, it is mentioned among other religious acts, ſuch as attending on the apoſtolic inſtructions and joining in prayer; and in the latter it ſeems to be diſtinguiſhed from, and aſſigned as a reaſon why, they did eat their meat with gladneſs, &c. Becauſe they regularly attended the daily ſervices of the temple

in a body, and celebrated the peculiar inſtitution of chriſtianity at home (having as yet no places appropriated to public chriſtian worſhip) therefore their ordinary enjoyments and behaviour were diſtinguiſhed by an amiable cheerfulneſs and ſimplicity of manners.

It even ſeems probable, that it was the cuſtom of the firſt chriſtians to obſerve this inſtitution every Lord's day in their religious aſſemblies. See the account of Paul's preaching at Troas, Acts xx. 7. where it is ſaid, *Upon the firſt day of the week, when the diſciples came together to break bread*; which plainly intimates, both that it was their cuſtom to aſſemble on the firſt day of the week to break bread, and that this was the principal purpoſe of their aſſembly; and, ſurely, none can ſuppoſe, that by *breaking bread* is meant here an ordinary repaſt, and not a religious action or obſervance. However, we are told, v. 11. that the apoſtle aſſiſted on that occaſion, and prolonged the aſſembly for other religious purpoſes.

Paul had not been a witneſs and follower of Chriſt during his miniſtry on earth, but was miraculouſly called and converted by the Lord a conſiderable time after his aſcenſion; and, as he was deſigned to be the apoſtle of Chriſt to the Gentiles, he was inſtructed in the knowledge of the whole chriſtian religion by the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, and that in ſo complete a manner, that when afterwards he came to Jeruſalem, and converſed with the apoſtles there, the *very chiefeſt* of them could add nothing to his knowledge of the chriſtian doctrines

or

or facts, as he affirms in the beginning of the epiſtle to the Galatians. Now this apoſtle, when writing his firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, has theſe words, ch. x. 16. *The cup of bleſſing which we bleſs, is it not the communion of the blood of Chriſt? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Chriſt?* Which words plainly ſhew that there was at that time a religious obſervance kept up in the chriſtian churches, and particularly at Corinth, of jointly partaking of a cup, called a cup of bleſſing, from a ſolemn bleſſing or thankſgiving being offered up to God before they partook of it; and of broken bread, all which was done in honour of Chriſt, as a memorial of his body and blood; the terms alſo, which the apoſtle here uſes, ſo nearly reſemble thoſe which our Lord uſed at the inſtitution of what is called his ſupper, that there ſeems no room to doubt, that the obſervance here ſpoken of was intended to be a conformity and obedience to that appointment of Chriſt. The words alſo, *the bread which we break*, ſeem to determine with certainty what is meant in other places, by *breaking of bread*, when uſed to expreſs a practice of the chriſtians of that time.

In the next chapter he reproves that church for ſome ſhameful irregularities its members committed in their manner of celebrating this inſtitution, whereby its original deſign was wholly perverted and loſt, and they had brought on themſelves many grievous conſequences. To remedy theſe things, he aſſures them, v. 23. that he had received from the Lord himſelf that which he had delivered to them concerning this

ſervice, when he preached the goſpel to them. He then proceeds to repeat what he had formerly told them concerning the manner in which Chriſt inſtituted this ordinance, and the declarations he then made of his intentions in it, and concludes his narrative in theſe words, v. 26. *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do ſhew the Lord's death till he come*; or, as the marginal verſion of our bibles reads it, (and the marginal is often found to be the juſter verſion) *ſhew ye forth*, καταγγελλετε; or, as the Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic verſions concur to render it, *Ye ſhall ſhew forth*, in the future tenſe.

Here, then, we have the apoſtle of us Gentiles (who was fully inſtructed by Chriſt himſelf, after his aſcenſion, in all chriſtian truths and duties, and particularly in the nature and deſign of this inſtitution) expreſsly declaring, that it was the Lord's deſign, that his followers ſhould, in this manner which he appointed, ſhew forth, or exhibit, a memorial of his death, and that till he come. By which expreſſion St. Paul in his epiſtles always, I think, denotes his coming to judgment at the laſt day. I cannot recollect any paſſage of his that obliges me to think he ever affixed any other ſenſe to the words. At leaſt, it ſeems moſt reaſonable to underſtand him here as ſpeaking of that coming of Chriſt, of which Chriſt himſelf ſpake in his diſcourſes with his diſciples immediately after the inſtitution of this ordinance. See John xiv. 3. and of which Paul ſpeaks in other parts of this epiſtle, ch. iv. 5. xv. 23.

I hope

I hope to be excuſed for thus conſidering the queſtion concerning *the univerſality and perpetuity of the obligation upon chriſtians to obſerve the ordinance of the Lord's ſupper*, at large, and in a general view, upon thoſe principles which appear to me moſt likely to afford a ſatisfactory ſolution to ſerious and impartial minds; becauſe, I am aware, that many beſides J. B. have been perplexed with difficulties on this head, which have unhappily reſtrained them from attending with their brethren on the celebration of this inſtitution of their maſter and lord. I ſhall now proceed to take ſome notice of the particular objections that gentleman have propoſed.

He ſays, p. 169 of your laſt number, "Had "it been our Lord's deſign that this ordinance "of his ſhould be a perpetual ſtanding rite, in- "diſpenſable to all his diſciples, is it not natural "to conclude, that this deſign of his would have "been as clearly and fully ſignified as words "could expreſs it?" Again, p. 170, "Now, "Whether Jeſus Chriſt hath given any inti- "mation of his deſigning this rite to be of in- "terminable obſervation, let his own words (and "they are very plain ones) be judge." He then refers to Matt. xxvi. 26—28. Mark xiv. 22—24. Luke xxii. 19, 20. and then aſks, "What is our Lord repreſented as ſaying by "theſe three hiſtorians? Why, no more than "this, Take, eat bread and drink wine in re- "membrance of me." Now here is no mention made, either as to the univerſality or perpetuity of that religious rite; or, in other words, Jeſus Chriſt here gives no orders to his apoſtles to charge thoſe of other nations (who ſhould believe

on him through their words) either to make uſe of this rite, as an eſſential part of his religion, or to hand it down in practice from one generation to another, unto the end of time.

Now upon this I would beg leave to obſerve,

1. I ſuppoſe it will be readily acknowledged to be the duty of all chriſtians to remember, and often to meditate on the Lord Jeſus; if then he inſtituted a ſervice expreſsly with deſign to aſſiſt in reviving and fixing a remembrance of himſelf on the minds of any of his followers, it ſeems reaſonable to conclude, that all who are ſubject to his authority, and comprehended within the declared general reaſon of the injunction, ſhould conſider themſelves as under the obligation of it.

2. Under favour, I muſt take leave to ſay, that the three hiſtorians have repreſented our Lord as ſaying ſomething more than what this gentleman ſpecifies; for beſides requiring to take, eat bread, and drink wine in remembrance of him, they repreſent him as adding the particular purpoſe of each of thoſe memorials, and the views with which thoſe concerned ſhould partake of them ſeverally, that the bread was to repreſent his body (Matthew and Mark) and under this particular view, as *given for them* (Luke) ſo likewiſe the cup, or the wine in it, is declared to be a repreſentative of his blood, and under this idea of it, as *his blood of the New Teſtament, which is ſhed for many for the remiſſion of ſins*, (Matt.) Or, *This cup is the New Teſtament in my blood, which is ſhed for you.* Now, as hath been ſhewn above, and I preſume will

will not be diſputed, all chriſtians are equally intereſted in the ſubjects which our Lord ſays are repreſented by each part of this inſtitution, and equally obliged to give a ſuitable attention to them; how then can we conceive, that he deſigned this for a partial, and not for an univerſal and perpetual ſervice in his church?

Beſides, in this command of our Saviour we find a deſcription of a certain claſs of mankind, *i. e.* thoſe for whom his body was broken; thoſe for the remiſſion of whoſe ſins his blood was ſhed. Now, who are they? Certainly all who ſincerely believe in him. Should not then all thoſe who come under the deſcription, conſider themſelves as under the obligation of the command? Our Lord every where treats with men as reaſonable creatures, and expects from them to conſider and weigh carefully what he ſays to them. When, therefore, he delivered a command to certain individuals, indeed, who were then preſent, but grounded it on general reaſons and by declared purpoſes, which equally import all his followers in all times and places, doth it not ſeem reaſonable to conclude, that he meant it for perpetual and univerſal obſervance? There was no need particularly to declare that meaning; it was ſufficiently included in the univerſality of the principles. Had he intended it for a local and temporary obſervance only, he would either have founded it on local or temporary conſiderations, or by ſome expreſs declaration have reſtricted it to the perſons, times and places he deſigned. Wherefore, when the apoſtles gave it in charge to their converts to celebrate

celebrate the Lord's ſupper, they did not do it "without any commiſſion, that we know of, from their divine maſter," their commiſſion was included in his original inſtitution, and they were well aware of it. Nor will it follow, that "all at this day, who join in this religious "rite, however innocently, conſcientiouſly, and "profitably (as they imagine) they may per-"form it, do yet obſerve it without a divine "warrant," for, "they do ground their obli-"gation to obſerve it on a command of Jeſus "Chriſt, the declared principles of which reach "to all his followers."

The caſe of our Lord's waſhing his diſciples' feet, and commanding them to waſh one another's feet, which the gentleman mentions, p. 171. I take to be very different from that of the Lord's ſupper. That was, in its own nature, a merely local and temporary injunction, founded on a local and temporary cuſtom of thoſe times and ages, ariſing from the imperfect manner in which the feet of thoſe people were ſhod, and which rendered the waſhing of the feet, when they returned from a journey or other buſineſs abroad, an expedient and neceſſary refreſhment. This was uſually performed by ſervants; but when a maſter of a family would expreſs great eſteem or veneration for his friend or gueſt, he would ſometimes waſh his feet himſelf. But in our own, and many other countries at this time, where our feet are better covered, we have no ſuch call for frequent waſhing them, and the cuſtom is laid aſide. However, we ſtill acknowledge the ſubſtance and ground

ground of our Lord's injunction, and the obligation arising from it and from his own example, to perform every act of kindness, condescension and respect to our christian brethren, which the customs of our times and country countenance, and their circumstances require. As to the Lord's supper; not only must it be incumbent on all christians, in all times and places, to remember the Lord Jesus, and meditate devoutly on his sufferings and death, but we know of no country where it is not, nor probably will there ever be a time or country on earth, where it will not be customary for the inhabitants to eat bread and drink wine, or something equivalent to each; consequently this can never, on that account, become a local or temporary institution.

As to the gentleman's notion, p. 171. that their eating and drinking, *i. e.* of our Lord and his apostles, at what we call the institution of his supper, "was only an appendix to the passover" annexed to it, or rather, the concluding part of it, which was, by Jesus Christ, applied to a different purpose from that which it had been applied to before; I can only say, that I do not find either in the evangelical or any other writer of the New Testament, the least hint of any relation it had to the passover, except that our Lord appointed it at the end of a paschal supper, which certainly will not warrant our considering it as an appendix to the passover. That the apostles and first christians had no such idea of it appears from their frequent partaking of the Lord's supper, *i. e.* every

first

firſt day of the week at leaſt; whereas the celebration of the paſſover was expreſsly reſtricted to once a year only. Beſides, Luke and Paul, in their relations of this inſtitution, concur to inform us, that one part of it at leaſt (that of the cup) was *after ſupper*, μετα το δειπνησαι. However admitting that it was cuſtomary among the Jews to eat bread and drink wine at the paſchal ſupper, as probably they uſually did at their ordinary meals, yet when our Lord took thoſe viands, and applied them to a different and ſpecial purpoſe of his own; they, by that appointment, acquired a new character and office, and ought no longer to be conſidered as a part or appendage of that to which they had formerly belonged; nor could they loſe that character and office by the deſtruction of the ſubject to which they had been formerly connected, ſo long as the purpoſes of their new appointment continued; which, in this caſe, will be perpetual.

As to what St. Paul ſays, 1 Cor. xi. 23—25. I ſhall not add to what has been offered above, but only to deſire the gentleman to read over again the whole of what the apoſtle ſays upon the ſubject from the 20th ver. and, I think, he will find he does not repreſent his meaning fairly in p. 176, 177.

"But (it will be aſked) did not all chriſtian churches, out of Judea, in the apoſtles' days, meet together to eat, &c. in remembrance of Chriſt? I do not know that; the ſcripture ſays no ſuch thing." But the ſcripture tells us, that the churches of Corinth and of Troas did; and why

why ſhould we doubt of the reſt, when the ſcriptures give us ſuch ſamples of the practice of the churches. Well: but to take off the evidence which ſeems to ariſe from Acts xx. 11. that "Paul adminiſtered the ſacrament to the elders from Epheſus before he left Miletus" (he ſhould have ſaid, to the diſciples at Troas) he alledges, as parallel, what we are told, Acts xxvii. 33—35. of his breaking bread on ſhip-board in his voyage to Rome. But does not the gentleman perceive a wide difference between the two caſes? At Troas Paul broke bread in a religious aſſembly of chriſtians on a Lord's day. See the 7th verſe of the 20th chapter, where it is intimated, that it was cuſtomary for thoſe diſciples to come together on that day to break bread; which ſurely cannot be meant of ordinary food, as it would be hard to ſuppoſe that they eat only one meal a week; on ſhip-board he broke bread in the midſt of a crew of heathen ſoldiers, ſailors, and probably other heathen paſſengers, with but very few of his chriſtian brethren about him, on what day of the week we know not, and this he expreſsly calls taking meat for their health.

As to the ſuggeſtion with which the gentleman concludes, concerning "the ſtrong prejudices of the Gentile converts, in behalf of the ſacrifical rites—which, in a manner, compelled the apoſtles to yield to a practice, which had no foundation in the original appointment of Jeſus Chriſt;" beſides, that I am unwilling to admit a ſuppoſition which derogates ſo much from the fidelity and fortitude of the apoſtles, I apprehend it has little foundation in fact. St. Paul cautions

cautions the diſciples at Corinth not to eat of things offered in ſacrifice to idols, when any one informed them that they had been ſo offered; but this only that they might not offend, or caſt a ſtumbling block before others. This they were often tempted to by fear, or a deſire to keep on good terms with their Gentile neighbours; but he never charges them with retaining ſtrong prejudices of their own in behalf of ſacrifical rites, or eating and drinking in honour of the objects of their former worſhip. As to the corruptions which had crept into the Corinthian church, in the celebration of the Lord's ſupper, they ſeem to have ariſen from their attachment to another cuſtom, not of a religious, but of a civil nature.

Pardon, gentlemen, the prolixity of this paper. If what hath been offered prove ſucceſsful to remove difficulties, and to eſtabliſh juſter ſentiments of our Lord's inſtitution in your correſpondent, or any of your readers, I ſhall have no reaſon to regret my labour; if it fail, I hope the gentleman will accept kindly my good intentions, the conſciouſneſs of which will be a real ſatisfaction to his and your

Very humble ſervant,

EUSEBIUS.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

I Think myſelf much obliged to your correſpondent PYRRHO, for the hint he has thrown out concerning the proper meaning of 2 Tim. iii. 16. *All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God.* Vol. 1. p. 453. His query appears to me to be ingenious, and to deſerve the conſideration of the learned.

I cannot help thinking that the defence of revelation is greatly and unneceſſarily incumbered with the defence of the inſpiration of the ſacred writers, who appear to have been men inſpired of God, and to have made no miſtake with reſpect to the *meſſages* which they expreſsly ſay they received from him; but who in general, had no need of inſpiration as writers. Had they *written* from inſpiration, I ſhould expect, that they would all of them have given as clear an intimation of it, as they have always done when they *ſpake* from inſpiration, as Moſes did in giving an account of the two tables of ſtone that were written with the finger of God: whereas, the only text from which this great and embarraſſing doctrine is inferred, is a caſual expreſſion of St. Paul, which ſeems to have quite another meaning, and may expreſs, as Pyrrho ſuppoſes, the uſe of the ſcripture in a moral reſpect.

This text, however, can be no argument to an unbeliever. He will take the books as he finds

finds them; and if he diſcovers in them any miſtake, in point of fact, or reaſoning, he will conclude that they were written by fallible men, liable to ſuch miſtakes. But, notwithſtanding this, he may ſtill perceive the ſtrongeſt marks of integrity, and good information concerning every thing of importance, and therefore may not be diſpoſed to reject the revelation it exhibits; unleſs he have been informed, and have taken it for granted, *a priori*, that the revelation abſolutely requires him to believe the inſpiration of the writers.

Many miſtakes in Livy or Tacitus do not make us diſbelieve the principal facts of the Roman Hiſtory. All perſons admit theſe, and believe more or leſs of the reſt as they are affected by the evidence. In like manner it appears to me, that a perſon may have no doubt concerning the moſt important facts in the evangelical hiſtory, ſuch as the miracles, doctrine, and reſurrection of Chriſt, and yet may withhold his aſſent with reſpect to ſeveral things of leſs importance, though related by the ſame writers; becauſe ſuch particulars may be ſo circumſtanced, as to have leſs internal evidence.

A perſon may believe, that the apoſtles were ſufficiently inſtructed in the principles of the religion which they were commiſſioned to teach, and yet may think that they have ſometimes uſed inſufficient arguments in ſupport of it; particularly that, in their controverſy with the Jews, they have made an injudicious uſe of the Old Teſtament, fancying that there were alluſions to chriſtianity where there were none; and

though

though ſuch arguments might convince, or, at leaſt, ſilence a Jew, who had been uſed to ſimilar argumentation, they may have much leſs weight with others.

Theſe ſuſpicions fall principally on St. Paul, who had been educated at the feet of Gamaliel, who underſtood all the Jewiſh refinements and ſubtleties, who has entered largely into the Jewiſh controverſy, and ſeemingly too much like a Jew. I may probably give you ſeveral inſtances, where I am apprehenſive that this is the caſe. At preſent I beg you would lay before the public, by means of your uſeful Repoſitory, the following obſervations on his reaſoning from the hiſtory of Melchizedec.

I am, gentlemen,

Your very humble ſervant,

PAULINUS.

CONCERNING *Melchizedec*, whoſe deſcent is no where mentioned, we read in Gen. xiv. 18—20. that he was *king of Salem*, and *prieſt of the moſt high God*; that *he bleſſed Abraham*; and that *Abraham preſented him with the tenth of the ſpoils* that he had taken in the plunder of the kings he had overthrown. And farther, the Pſalmiſt, ſuppoſed to prophecy concerning Chriſt, ſaith, Pſalm cx. 4. *The Lord hath ſworn, and will not repent; Thou art a prieſt for ever, after the order of Melchizedec.*

Theſe few particulars are all that we know, that can be depended upon, concerning Melchizedec; and, likewiſe, all that St. Paul ap-

pears to have known concerning him. Obſerve, now, what inferences he draws from them. In the firſt place, let us ſee what he makes of the dignity and office of Melchizedec himſelf.

Heb. vii. 2—10. *Firſt, being, by interpretation, king of righteouſneſs, and after that alſo king of Salem, that is, king of peace, without father, without mother, without deſcent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but, made like unto the ſon of God, abideth a prieſt continually. Now conſider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the ſpoils. And verily they that are of the ſons of Levi, who receive the office of the prieſthood, have a commandment to take tythes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham. But he whoſe deſcent is not counted from them, received tythes of Abraham, and bleſſed him that had the promiſes. And, without all coutradiction, the leſs is bleſſed of the better. And, here, men that die receive tythes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witneſſed, that he liveth. And, as I may ſo ſay, Levi alſo, who received tythes, paid tythes in Abraham; for he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedec met him.*

St. Paul, we ſee, makes Abraham, and the Levitical prieſts deſcended from him to be vaſtly inferior to Melchizedec, becauſe Abraham, and the tribe of Levi, in his loins, paid tythes to him, and were bleſſed by him. 2dly, Becauſe Melchizedec's deſcent is not particularly mentioned, he therefore concludes him to be a perſon, actually, *without father, and without mother.*

And

And 3dly, Becauſe another is ſaid to have been *made a prieſt, after the order of Melchizedec*; therefore, Melchizedec himſelf, ſure, muſt not only be a proper prieſt, but one that ſuſtains the character and office of prieſt for ever. He certainly yet lives, and muſt live, in the exerciſe of his prieſtly office, to all eternity.

Afterwards we are given to underſtand, that Chriſt (a perſon deſcended from the tribe of Judah, to which no prieſthood was annexed) being appointed a prieſt, the office of the prieſthood is, thereby, transferred to another tribe. And what is this, but to make an entire change in the conſtitution of the law itſelf, which is the ſame thing as its being formally abrogated, and argues its imperfection? For had it been a perfect inſtitution, it would always have kept in force. Moreover, Chriſt being made a prieſt, *after the order of Melchizedec*, and *not after the order of Aaron*, the preference is apparently given to Melchizedec. So that our Lord is created a prieſt according to the plan of a different, and better conſtitution than that of Aaron; and, being made a prieſt for ever, he entirely ſuperſedes, and puts an end to, the ſucceſſion of prieſts according to the law, whoſe adminiſtration wanted proper validity and perfection.

Laſtly; That the apoſtle might not loſe the minuteſt circumſtance that was favourable to his purpoſe, he doth not fail to take notice, that Chriſt hath an advantage over the prieſts according to the law; inaſmuch as, *he was not made a prieſt without an oath*, a circumſtance which was wanting in the conſecration of the Jewiſh prieſts;

or rather in the deſignation of their family to the prieſtly office. Theſe ſeveral particulars are all contained in the following extract.

Heb. vii. 11—22. *If, therefore, perfection were by the Levitical prieſthood (for under it the people received the law) what further need was there that another prieſt ſhould ariſe, after the order of Melchizedec, and not after the order of Aaron? For the prieſthood being changed, there is made of neceſſity a change alſo in the law. For he of whom theſe things are ſpoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident, that our Lord ſprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moſes ſpake nothing concerning prieſthood. And it was yet far more evident, for that, after the ſimilitude of Melchizedec, there ariſeth another prieſt; who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endleſs life. For he teſtifieth, Thou art a prieſt for ever, after the order of Melchizedec. For there is verily a diſannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakneſs and unprofitableneſs thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by which we draw nigh unto God. And, inaſmuch as, not without an oath he was made a prieſt; for thoſe prieſts were made without an oath, but this with an oath, by him that ſaid unto him, The Lord ſware, and will not repent, Thou art a prieſt for ever, after the order of Melchizedec. By ſo much was Jeſus made the ſurety of a better teſtament.*

I am apprehenſive that, upon examination, too many things will appear to have been taken for granted by St. Paul, in this paſſage. In the firſt

firſt place, do any authentic memoirs we have left us of the life of Melchizedec, ſufficiently prove him to be, *without all controverſy*, a perſon of greater dignity and worth than Abraham? There is nothing in all the accounts we have of him, but what ſuits very well with the notion of an ordinary petty ſovereign in the land of Canaan; ſuch an one as Abraham himſelf was. As to Abraham's preſenting him with the tenth of the ſpoils, it might have been a compliment paid to his age and ſanctity; or Melchizedec, being a neighbouring prince, he might have been a conſiderable ſufferer by the ravages committed by the kings which Abraham had conquered, and a tenth might be his proper ſhare of the ſpoil. But, be this as it will, this act of Abraham's by no means ſeems to be ſuch an act of homage, as neceſſarily proves Melchizedec to have been his ſuperior. And what hinders that a perſon of a more venerable age may not bleſs a perſon, inferior to him in point of years, but quite as pious, as much favoured and diſtinguiſhed by heaven, and, in all other reſpects, ſuperior to himſelf.

Secondly, I ſhould be glad to be farther informed concerning this *order of prieſthood* that St. Paul mentions. Had Melchizedec been a prieſt in any other ſenſe, than that in which every prince and head of a tribe (as Abraham, Iſaac, or Jacob) was a prieſt in thoſe early times, we ſhould, certainly, have had ſome farther account of it than we have in the Old Teſtament. Is it not very ſurprizing, that the ſcripture ſhould keep ſuch a profound ſilence concerning this grand order of prieſthood; and

that it ſhould have been ſo much confined, as not to extend to Abraham, or any way affect his poſterity? For it is certain that the prieſthood in the family of Aaron was entirely unconnected with, and independent of it. And yet St. Paul ſuppoſeth it to have ſubſiſted all the time that the Jewiſh prieſthood was in force; yea even to this day, and without end. *For he hath neither beginning of days, nor end of years; but, being made like unto the ſon of God, abideth a prieſt continually.* Heb. vii. 3.

Beſides, I am apprehenſive that the perpetual prieſthood of Melchizedec will interfere with the perpetual prieſthood of Chriſt himſelf; ſince there is no where any intimation given of the diſſolution of this prieſthood of Melchizedec.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

If the following ſtrictures on the hiſtory of the apoſtle Peter's fall, with a view to draw from it a preſumptive argument in favour of chriſtianity, can be deemed to have importance and merit ſufficient to gain them the indulgence of a place in your uſeful Repoſitory, it will give real pleaſure to him who is, with great reſpect,

Your humble ſervant,

July 9, 1770. A. N.

IT was our Lord's charge to Peter, *When thou art converted*, or returned from thoſe wanderings into which I know thou wilt fall, into the

the paths of wiſdom and duty, *ſtrengthen thy brethren.* And indeed, the hiſtory of the *fall and recovery* of this diſciple, with that of his ſubſequent behaviour in the miniſtry and apoſtleſhip, contributes much to ſtrengthen our faith and hope.

This affecting narrative gives us ſuch a view of the *candor and benevolence of our Lord's temper*, as cannot but lead to very favourable apprehenſions of the truth of his claims. The part that Peter would act was not concealed from his penetrating inſight into futurity, and he accordingly foretold how this his warm and reſolute friend would deny him, with the circumſtances of his conduct. This was an indication of a diſcernment more than natural, and of a ſpirit divinely prophetic.—But it ſhould be particularly obſerved, that this prediction was a kind warning to awaken the humility and caution of Peter: yet foreſeeing that this warning would not prevent the fall of Peter, he interpoſes his own generous, compaſſionate and powerful interceſſion to hinder its malignant conſequences. The prediction of his ſhameful and aggravated guilt, is not accompanied with any terms of anger, or words of reproach; nay, with great tenderneſs and a provident compaſſion he aſſures Peter, he had prayed for him, that his faith ſhould not fail: that the recollection of his Lord's pity and prayers might prove a healing balm to his wounds in the hour of repentance, and might ſave him from deſpondency in the ſeaſon of his grief, by reviving a

cheering ſenſe of his maſter's affection, and by indulging the expectation of forgiveneſs. At the time of his own heavy diſtreſs, and ſtanding at the moſt unrighteous tribunal, Chriſt does not, through the weight of grief, forget, nor, through the power of reſentment, throw off all farther care for, his criminal diſciple. He turned about and looked upon Peter, with an eye of authority and tenderneſs that melted him into penitential ſorrow, that conveyed the offers of pardon with the juſt expreſſions of reſentment. Another circumſtance which illuſtrates the goodneſs and gentleneſs of Chriſt in this affair, is, that, after his reſurrection, it was directed, that the report of this event ſhould be particularly addreſſed to Peter; Go your way, tell his diſciples, and *Peter*, that he goes before them into Galilee. It ſeems, that Chriſt was ſolicitous to ſend this diſciple a particular aſſurance of his unalterable affection; the ſpeedieſt aſſurance that his maſter would not deny or neglect him. It would, doubtleſs, exquiſitely touch, it would ſooth and gladden the heart of this dejected diſciple, to hear that a meſſage of kindneſs and regard was ſent to him, by name, in diſtinction from the reſt. — Now, in how ſtriking and amiable a light does the compaſſion and benevolence of Jeſus appear through this ſcene! Here is nothing of the warmth and eager indignation of an enthuſiaſt. His conduct forbids the ſuſpicion, that falſehood and deceit, or an intent to impoſe on mankind in their higheſt concerns, might harbour in his boſom. Could a heart ſo meek, gentle and good, entertain ſuch a baſe

a baſe deſign, a deſign which would entail diſappointment and miſery on ſo many thouſands.

As to the conduct of Peter, not to inſiſt upon the reſolution he avowed of a readineſs to die with him; which though raſhly made, when danger and ſufferings for Chriſt were at a diſtance from his fears and apprehenſion, yet muſt be conſidered as a favourable teſtimony to his maſter: The very act of denying his maſter, was a real acknowledgement of the innocence of Chriſt. The man, who incurred the aggravated guilt of lies, profaneneſs and perjury, to ſecure himſelf from ſufferings and death, would have, doubtleſs, taken the more ſafe, innocent, nay commendable method of fairly expoſing the crimes, and laying open the whole impoſture practiſed by Jeſus Chriſt, if he had been a witneſs of any thing of that nature; and it could not have been concealed from ſo conſtant and intimate aſſociate through the whole of his miniſtry, even in its moſt retired ſcenes. Nay, a man of his haſty, forward temper, ſo ſoon animated with hope, and as ſoon depreſſed with fear, would both by the approach of ſuffering, and the greatneſs of diſappointment, have been eaſily ſhaken from a confederacy in a falſehood, had he been a partner in ſuch a ſcheme. The proſpect, which gave ſo violent a ſhock to his faith, in a maſter of known innocence and integrity, would have more eaſily and effectually broke the bands of alliance with an impoſtor; it would have hurried him into a diſcovery, and not have betrayed him into a mean and hazardous denial of his maſter.—What ſhall we ſay, when this denial is retracted and lamented

mented with all the bitterneſs of penitential ſorrow. This is to own, that he had abuſed goodneſs and injured innocence. What ſhall we ſay, when this denial of his Lord is improved into an occaſion of a more ſteady and uniform attachment to him; when from this time he became more bold to preach in his name, more reſolute to declare his relation to him, and more active to advance his honour and glory? Within the compaſs of a few weeks, this timorous, cowardly diſciple is brought with John before the Jewiſh council, for preaching and working miracles in the name of Jeſus Chriſt; and now ſo far from ſaying, He *knew not the man*, he firmly maintains the honour of Jeſus, nay he boldly charges the murder of this prince of life on the chief men of the nation, and ſolemnly warns them of their guilt and danger in conſequence of it. Acts iv. 5—12. Can this be accounted for on any other ſuppoſition, than that Peter had never diſcovered, in all his intimacy with Chriſt, any one thing unbecoming a good and honeſt man; that he had received the cleareſt proof of his reſurrection from the dead; and that on a review of his life and claims, ſupported with this new evidence of his triumph over the grave—he was convinced there was no other name given under heaven, whereby we could be ſaved.—He, who had denied his maſter, was glad to return to every act of obedience and reſpect to him: and he, who was coward enough to ſay to one of the weaker ſex, he knew nothing of him, was, in a few weeks, bold to preach in his name before princes and magiſtrates,

magiſtrates, and at length to meet death in his cauſe. A plain and ſtriking teſtimony to the truth of Chriſt's claims, and the abundant evidences of his miſſion from God. Well might he ſay, and well may we rejoice in the declaration, *We have not followed cunningly-deviſed fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* This was a declaration made by him after a long courſe of labours and ſufferings for Chriſt; and when he knew that the time of his deceaſe was quickly approaching: A declaration we ought more cheerfully and devoutly to regard, ſince the doctrine, to which he bore his dying teſtimony, is the doctrine of forgiveneſs of ſins.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

If you have a vacant corner in your Repoſitory, *and* Pyrrho *has not received more ſatisfactory information as to the meaning of* πασα γραφη θεοπνευστος, 2 Tim. iii. 16. *the following is at his ſervice.*

J. B.

PYRRHO's inference is, *I own*, ingenious enough, viz. that "θεοπνευστος, ſignifies the "ſpirit of the chriſtian religion, or has a prin-"cipal regard to a divine temper and diſpoſi-"tion;" yet I cannot but think, that the premiſes from whence the inference is deduced, are merely hypothetical, having no foundation in that

that paſſage of ſcripture concerning which information is deſired. For, 1. The apoſtle, in that place, is not guarding his ſon Timothy "againſt "thoſe who made a glaring profeſſion of reli-"gion without feeling its ſanctifying power," as the gentleman ſuppoſes; but is giving a character of the αγια γραμματα, which, he ſays, v. 15. his pupil had known from a child;—and, 2. θεοπνευστος, ſeems to me not to require any exegeſis; but is itſelf exegetical, and clearly explains what ſort of Jewiſh ſcriptures the apoſtle refers to, that is, their *prophetic ſcriptures*, which, as St. Peter obſerves, 2 Peter i. 20, 21, were not of private interpretation, nor the product of human invention, but holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt.

That St. Paul, in the place under conſideration, refers to the prophetic ſcriptures, and none other, appears plain to me from the foregoing verſe, where he ſays, that the holy ſcriptures are able (not, to *make wiſe unto ſalvation*, as we render the words, but) to inſtruct or inform Timothy and others in the (nature of that) ſalvation which is by, or under the faith of Chriſt Jeſus, *i. e.* the religious diſpenſation inſtituted by him.

Now, what ſcriptures are ſo able, ſo properly calculated to convey this information, and to qualify the man of God—the miniſters of Chriſt—for thoſe various parts of the miniſterial office which the apoſtle here mentions, viz. teaching evangelical doctrines—convincing men of their faults—correcting their miſtakes—and training them up to the obedience of righteouſ-

neſs

neſs and true holineſs; what ſcriptures, I ſay, ſo proper for the above-mentioned purpoſes as the prophetic, which are confeſſedly inſpired (not in the claſſical, but) in the theological ſenſe of inſpiration; and in which are ſhown, beforehand, the coming of that juſt one—the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that was to follow—the nature and extent of his kingdom—the qualifications and happineſs of his ſubjects, and the miſery and ruin of his contumacious and irreclaimable enemies.

P. S. Though I am fully perſuaded that the chriſtian ſcheme was not the effect of mere human invention; yet I beg leave to propoſe it as a query, whether the *apoſtles and firſt preachers of chriſtianity* can, with propriety and ſtrictneſs of phraſe, be ſtiled inſpired perſons, any more than the immediate ſcholars of Plato, Ariſtotle, &c. could be ſo called, ſuppoſing the doctrine which thoſe philoſophers taught had been divine verities?

Are they *(the apoſtles, &c.)* ever repreſented in the New Teſtament under that character? Or is there any neceſſity to ſuppoſe them inſpired "in the theological ſenſe of inſpiration?" As the fundamental doctrines of chriſtianity are very few, and the general good temper and practice, they are deſigned to lead to, extremely plain and evident; did it require power and capacity more than ordinary, to retain a clear view of theſe *truths and duties*, after they had been inculcated upon your minds for forty days together; ſuppoſing, againſt all evidence to the contrary, that they had known nothing of them before?

before?—Might they not remember our Saviour's prophecies and predictions, and write or diſcourſe of them, as occaſion required, without ſupernatural illumination?

It is true, indeed, that Jeſus Chriſt, before he left the world, promiſed his apoſtles to ſend the ſpirit of truth to guide them into all truth; but now, if by the ſpirit of truth be meant the Holy Ghoſt, do not we find in the hiſtory of the Acts, that when they were really indued with the Holy Ghoſt, it was rather to qualify them for ſpreading chriſtian truth, than to give them new and brighter views of it?

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

If you think it agreeable to the deſign of your Repoſitory, to inſert the following queries, *and* remark, *an anſwer from ſome of your correſpondents, who are well acquainted with the cuſtoms of the Jewiſh church during the period between the days of Moſes and John the Baptiſt, may perhaps be entertaining to ſeveral of your readers, as well as a very obliging favour to,*

Your humble ſervant,

S. C.

Query. WAS baptiſing with water commonly uſed before the days of John the Baptiſt as an *initiating rite*, when converts from Heatheniſh were received into the Jewiſh church? If

If this was common, at what time did the uſage of the ceremony begin, and what gave riſe to it? Did all converts ſubmit to it from its firſt uſage, or did it gain eſteem gradually? Was any form of addreſs uſed upon the occaſion, and if any form was uſed, what was it?

Dr. John Taylor, indeed, ſays, * that the learned in Hebrew antiquities inform us, it was a common and ancient practice to baptiſe, as well as circumciſe the heathen proſelytes when they were taken into the Jewiſh church. The doctor adds, "I have reaſon to believe it was a *divine inſtitution*;" but the argument, by which he attempts to prove it a *divine inſtitution*, does not appear to me concluſive. It ſeems to take for granted, that whatever was neceſſary to render a circumciſed Jew, qualified to go into the temple or eat of the holy things, was neceſſary to a heathen proſelyte's being admitted a member of the Jewiſh church; or that, for a heathen proſelyte to be admitted a member of the Jewiſh church, and to be in ſuch a ſtate of purity, that, according to the law of Moſes, he might go into the temple, or eat of the holy things, were immediately and neceſſarily connected. But, undoubtedly, there muſt have been a great variety of circumſtances, in which it would not be lawful for a circumciſed Jew to go into the temple, and which, by a parity of reaſon, muſt alſo prevent a circumciſed heathen proſelyte from going there; nor does it ſeem probable, that any perſon would think of going

* Covenant of Grace and Baptiſm, the Token of it, p. 58.

into

into the temple * immediately after he was circumciſed. There was evidently a moſt perfect impartiality in requiring all to be circumciſed, who expected the privileges of that covenant God made with Abraham, whether they were, or were not, his natural deſcendants. And ſince the covenant was the ſame to all, it is natural to expect the ſeal, or initiating ordinance, would be the ſame to all (unleſs we had a plain proof to the contrary) during the ſame period.

If baptiſm was uſed together with circumciſion, in the caſe of proſelyted heathens, as an initiating ordinance, there were two acts in that initiatory ordinance, one of which muſt never be repeated, but the other muſt frequently be repeated, without the leaſt intimation of any difference between the firſt, and the ſubſequent acts being given us by the doctor; nay, whilſt his argument, viz. legal uncleanneſſes, requires an entire ſimilarity; and can any inſtance, parallel to this, be produced in the religious ceremonies of any nation?

There ſeems alſo, to me, ſome inconſiſtency between the reaſon, which the doctor ſays, (p. 58.) induced him to think that baptiſm accompanied circumciſion, by *divine inſtitution, as part of the initiating ordinance* in the caſe of converted heathens, viz. their many legal uncleanneſſes; and what he ſeems to allow is eſſential to an initiating ordinance, viz. that it is not to be repeated (p. 63.) whereas it is certain, baptiſm muſt neceſſarily be oft times repeated, for the very reaſons which induced him to think it initiatory by divine inſtitution, viz. their frequent

* Gen. xxxiv. 25. Joſ. v. 8.

legal

legal uncleanneſſes; and will it not be a very improper, vague uſe of the terms *initiating ordinance*, if they do not ſignify *that by which* a perſon is *admitted* into a ſociety, but the firſt time he performs an action, which he muſt frequently repeat after he has been admitted?

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

I ſhould be very much obliged to you to inſert the following remarks on Job, *in your* Theological Repoſitory.

CANTABRIGIENSIS.

THE ample page of ancient hiſtory is replete with ſtriking examples of the moſt heroic fortitude and patience: That of modern hiſtory is not deficient in this point.

The conduct of Regulus, who returns to Carthage, where he knew a cruel torment was to be his fate, is great, virtuous and noble. He knew if he returned, he was to ſuffer death, and to ſuffer it under the moſt ignominious torture: but ſtill this would not tempt him to break his oath. Such virtue was found even in a heathen. *Marcum Regulum illigatum in machinâ, reſectis palpebris Carthaginienſes vigilando necaverunt*, ſays Tertullian. Endued with a magnanimous ſoul, no complaint or impatient word is heard from his mouth; he appears happier than his tormentors. Endued with ſuch a ſoul, Seneca, who is, by Nero, unjuſtly con-

demned to die, ſmiles amidſt the pangs of death; the Attic Sage ſups with glee the poiſonous bowl, the reward of a life ſpent in the paths of virtue and honour. There are numberleſs other inſtances.

Impatient men generally begin with curſing the day they were born, and caſting reflections on the providence of the Almighty. *Let the day periſh wherein I was born, and the night wherein it was ſaid, There is a man-child born,* ſays Job, chap. iii. *Let darkneſs and the ſhadow of death ſtain it: let a cloud dwell upon it; let the darkneſs of the day terrify it; let that night be ſolitary, let no joyful voice come therein; let them curſe it that curſe the day.* The whole third chapter is full of ſuch expreſſions. In the tenth he ſays, *I will ſay unto God, Do not condemn me; ſhew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me; Is it good unto thee that thou ſhouldeſt oppreſs?* Theſe hardly appear to be the words of one patient above all men; if there is any meaning in words, they ſcarce come ſhort of blaſphemy.—We are firſt of all told, that Job had large poſſeſſions and many children, that meſſengers came, one after another, to inform him of the loſs of his goods, and the death of his children; that he was ſmitten with ſore boils.—Theſe are no very ſingular inſtances of affliction; they are incident to humanity. Job's three friends came, mourned and wept for his miſfortune; they rent their mantles, and ſprinkled duſt upon their heads. Job then, in the third chapter, complains moſt vehemently. They con-

converſe with him, in a few ſucceeding chapters, in a friendly and affectionate manner; but he appears diſpleaſed with the providence of the Almighty, and calls in queſtion the goodneſs of it. He breaks out moſt bitterly in the 13th chapter, *Ye are forgers of lies, ye are phyſicians of no value.* Do not theſe expreſſions argue an impatient and impetuous mind? How unlike are they to the behaviour of that noble woman, who, as Joſephus tells us, ſaw her huſband and ſeven children tortured before her eyes. They were tortured for what was good, great and praiſe-worthy. Yet ſhe never curſes the day of her birth, nor is deſirous of ſaying to the Almighty, Why doſt thou thus? She does not affront the by-ſtanders by calling them liars and fools; but is meek, lowly, and reſigned. But Job, as Eliphas the Temanite juſtly ſays in the 15th chapter, *Caſt off fear, reſtrained prayer before God, and his mouth uttered iniquity.* I ſhould be very glad if ſome perſon would anſwer this, and give me ſome other reaſon than a proverb, why Job ſhould be reckoned the moſt patient of men.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

PAULINUS, in his obſervations on the reaſoning of St. Paul, Rom. v. 12—14. in your laſt number, aſks theſe two queſtions:

1. In what ſenſe is it true that there was no law between Adam and Moſes?

2. How did men ſin after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion under the law of Moſes?

According to my way of thinking, with your leave, I anſwer thus:

With regard to moral obligation, or the voice of human reaſon and conſcience (if we call this a law) man himſelf is this law, this law-giver and judge to himſelf; and whatever he may deſerve for acting contrary to it, he is not actually condemned by it to death, or any particular puniſhment. In the law expreſsly given by God to Adam about the forbidden fruit, and that he gave to the Iſraelites by Moſes, the caſe was otherwiſe. God, without conſulting man, enacts and publiſhes theſe, and the ſanctions of them by his own abſolute authority. So that the one may be truly and literally, the other only figuratively ſtiled a law. As to the ſanction of the law to Adam and to the Iſraelites, I apprehend it was the very ſame, not *mortality*, but the actual and immediate inflicting of death. In the day that thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt *die*; not thou ſhalt *become mortal*. He was mortal before, conſtantly and neceſſarily ſupported

ported by food and air, liable to decay and diſſolution in time, notwithſtanding theſe recruits, without ſome extraordinary preſerving efficacy, either immediately from God, or perhaps from what is called the Tree of Life.

Adam and all his poſterity die at laſt in conſequence of their being turned out of Paradiſe, and deprived of this panacea, or great reſtorative, and this in conſequence of one man's [Adam's] ſin. All mankind may, more or leſs, tranſgreſs the rules and dictates of reaſon, but none but Adam and Eve, and thoſe who afterwards were under an expreſs law of God, like that of Moſes, threatening death for diſobedience, could ſin after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion; not even *Cain* when he murdered his brother, till a divine law was promulgated againſt murder, requiring blood for blood. Gen. ix. 6. which perhaps was the reaſon God did not puniſh Cain with immediate death, or ſuffer any one elſe to do it.*

I know not whether this will ſatisfy Paulinus, or any body elſe, but at preſent it appears to be the true ſtate of the caſe to, Gentlemen,

Your humble ſervant,

July 19, 1770. W. W.

* To make a law againſt any moral apparent crime before it has ever been committed, ſeems prepoſterous, a ſuppoſition as if nature did not forbid it; but previouſly by a law and ſevere penalty, too, to guard againſt an action which has nothing apparent in itſelf, to guard a rational creature againſt it, and yet may be pernicious, is highly proper, and worthy the Father of men.

The articles ſigned EUCHARISTICUS *and* DION, *not coming to hand till that ſigned* CHARISTUS, *on the ſame ſubject, was printed off, it was thought unneceſſary to print more than the following extracts from them.*

I Have hitherto only hinted what Chriſt might expect to be the caſe, even though he gave no expreſs orders to his miniſters to make this rite a part of his religion, and to hand it down to ſucceeding generations, and conſequently, that his intention concerning its perpetuity might from hence be collected. But I am far from thinking theſe the only, or the principal reaſons we have to conclude, that he intended it for a perpetual and univerſal rite. It appears to me, that expreſs orders for obſerving it in this extent, are contained in the commiſſion he gave them, when, having converſed with them 40 days concerning the things relating to the kingdom of God, he was juſt going to leave them, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. *Go and teach* (or proſelyte) *all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt; teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.* Here all people, as well as the Jews, and in all ages, as well as that before the deſtruction of Jeruſalem (an event in which moſt nations had no concern) are repreſented as the objects of converſion and inſtruction. And what reaſon have we to apprehend that the celebration of the Lord's ſupper was not one

one of thoſe things which he had commanded the apoſtles? Do not the evangeliſts aſſert it? Does not this writer himſelf acknowledge it? His words, therefore, p. 174. "If the apoſtles "had given ſuch a charge to thoſe they con- "verted, they muſt have done it without any "commiſſion, that we know of, from their "divine maſter," ſeem very haſty. This commiſſion will juſtify them, if they gave ſuch a charge to all they converted. And there is not the leaſt reaſon to imagine they miſtook our Lord's meaning, in inculcating the obſervation of the euchariſt in conſequence of what he did at the concluſion of the paſſover, as ſome have inſinuated very much to their diſcredit, and I think in direct oppoſition to the ſpirit of our Lord's promiſes, *that the Father would ſend the Holy Ghoſt in his name, who ſhould teach them all things, and guide them into all truth*, John xiv. 26. and xvi. 13. And that all chriſtian churches out of Judea, as well as in it, did meet together in the apoſtles' time, to eat bread, and drink wine in remembrance of Chriſt, is very probable from the brief hiſtories of them which are in our hands, and from the accounts we have of the prevalence of this practice in the ages immediately ſucceeding; which it cannot be ſuppoſed would have been the caſe, had it not been injoined by the founders of thoſe churches.

But what ſets this ſubject in the cleareſt light is St. Paul's account of it, 1 Cor. x. 16. and xi. 23. &c. From which it is undeniable thoſe Gentile chriſtians obſerved this ordinance in the apoſtles' time—that it was delivered to them by St. Paul himſelf, and that he received it, not from any

man, or the practice of any church, but immediately from Jeſus Chriſt (Gal. i. 12.) Now can it be ſeriouſly thought that Chriſt, ſeveral years after his aſcenſion, would have revealed this ordinance to Paul, the apoſtle of the Gentiles, and that he would have delivered it to the Corinthians, if it was not intended to be obſerved among them to the end of time? What had they to do with the Jewiſh paſſover, or the deſtruction of Jeruſalem? And when this ordinance was greatly abuſed by the Corinthians, as it was when this epiſtle was written, would not the apoſtle have aboliſhed it, if it had been a piece of *will-worſhip*, or a matter of no conſequence in itſelf, that might be omitted, being only indulged them in compliance with their prejudices? St. Paul was not backward to diſcountenance will-worſhip, and to rebuke chriſtians for an ungrounded attachment to meats and days, &c. whereas, inſtead of that, he declares to them, afreſh, its divine original, exhibits its true nature and deſign, and ſtrongly intimates its perpetual duration by ſaying, *As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye ſhew forth the Lord's death till he come.*

Were any thing farther neceſſary to complete the argument drawn from this account of St. Paul, one might take notice of the ſignal tokens of the diſpleaſure of the head of the church againſt the Corinthians for profaning this ordinance. *For this cauſe* (ſaith the apoſtle) *many are ſick and weak among you, and many ſleep*; and *they were chaſtened of the Lord, that they might not be condemned with the world.* Would he who came

came to free the world from ſuperſtition and unprofitable ceremonies, have exerted his power to chaſtiſe them for their careleſs treatment of a rite which had no foundation in his religion, but was an effect of their own prejudices in behalf of ſacrifical rites, or eating and drinking in honour of the objects of their former worſhip? Surely to aſſert this would be very diſhonourable to that wiſe and gracious governor!

In ſhort, whatever might be ſuppoſed concerning our Lord's original inſtitution of this rite, if we make a queſtion of its being deſigned to be a perpetual and univerſal ordinance in his church, I cannot conceive that any rational account can be given of his conduct in the caſe of the Corinthians, but on the ſuppoſition that he looked upon it as an important ſervice, and intended it to be obſerved by all his followers: And I am perſuaded that, together with juſt reflections on its nature and deſign, and the practice of other churches in the primitive ages, this account of the affair in St. Paul's epiſtle to the Corinthians, will conſtitute as clear and full evidence as can be expected in ſuch a caſe, of the Lord's ſupper being not a local and temporary, but an univerſal and perpetual ordinance.

Could it be ſhown that waſhing one another's feet, of which Chriſt gave an example and command to his apoſtles, would be as uſeful in all ages and places as it was then in Judea—that it was underſtood in a ſtrict and literal ſenſe, and practiſed immediately and conſtantly by them and their ſucceſſors; and that an account of the ſame ſervice was delivered ſeveral years

years afterward by Jeſus Chriſt to St. Paul, or any other perſon, to be practiſed in the Gentile church; then might we, with as much reaſon, think ourſelves obliged to waſh one another's feet, in our religious aſſemblies, as to eat, &c. but in all theſe reſpects the compariſon fails, ſo that the difference between the two caſes is extremely great.

EUCHARISTICUS.

THE *expreſs* words at the inſtitution will extend to the continuance of this rite. Matthew and Mark, add the words, *which was ſhed for* MANY. Luke, indeed, ſays, *which is ſhed for* YOU. John is wholly ſilent on the ſubject. So that, according to the account of two of the evangeliſts, MANY are to be partakers of the benefits ariſing from the death of Chriſt, on the poſitive declaration of our bleſſed Lord, delivered with a peculiar emphaſis at the very time of the inſtitution of the rite. So, it ſhould ſeem, that this memorial was intended by our Lord to be practiſed by his diſciples in after ages, as well as by thoſe who were with him the night before he died for the ſins of the whole world.—Add alſo, the command, *Go, teach all nations*, which muſt imply the teaching of thoſe doctrines by thoſe people, and in ſuch manner, as they were received from the apoſtles, to whom *only* the command was *directly* given. For the doctrines eſtabliſhed by the new covenant, were to continue until Chriſt's ſecond coming, and not be confined

fined to one age, or one country; but all ages, and all nations ſhould confeſs that JESUS IS CHRIST, TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER.

Though St. Paul was *all things to all men, that he might gain ſome*, we do not any where find, notwithſtanding the pejudices of the Gentile converts to ſacrifical rites, that he ever gave up any inſtitution of chriſtianity, to thoſe prejudices.—To preſerve conſiſtency,—what Chriſt eſtabliſhed for the MANY, St. Paul practiſed himſelf, and corrected the groſs indecencies which were uſed in the adminiſtration of that rite among the Corinthians, and which cuſtom and prejudice had familiarized.—Since, then, the Lord's ſupper is an inſtitution to be celebrated in remembrance, by the expreſs and implied directions of my only acknowledged lord and maſter, under God;—by the corroborating evidence of the practice of St. Paul, and by the uniform acquieſcence of the whole chriſtian world,—I am led to retain my former ſentiments on this ſubject, ſtill keeping my mind open to the conviction of ſtronger reaſons and clearer arguments to the contrary.—Your correſpondent and candid inquirer, J. B. hath my hearty thanks for his ingenious eſſay, which hath drawn me through a track, which may, in the end, enable me the better to *give an account of the faith that is in me*, and which, at the ſame time, moſt plainly demonſtrates the great utility, not to ſay, neceſſity of a Theological Repoſitory.

DION.

To the Editors of the Theological Repository.

GENTLEMEN,

I HOPE you will not think me impertinent, though an entire ſtranger, in laying before you a criticiſm on the thirteenth verſe of the ſecond chapter of Paul's ſecond epiſtle to the Theſſalonians.

Ειλατο is an aoriſt in the middle voice, and may ſignify *delivered* or *taken*, as well as *choſen*. Αρχη properly imports *power*, *dominion* or *rule*, though it ſometimes ſignifies *beginning*. Indeed, if we take theſe words in their primary ſenſe, the place will be elliptical; but the ellipſis may be eaſily ſupplied by το μυστηριον in the ſeventh verſe, and it may be rendered thus: "But we are bound to "give thanks to God always upon your account, "brethren, beloved of Chriſt, that God hath "*delivered* you from the *power*, τε μυστηριε ο ηδη "ενεργειται, of the myſtery which now worketh "unto ſalvation, by the ſanctification of the "ſpirit and belief of the truth."

I ſubmit it to you, gentlemen, whether this rendering be more agreeable to Paul's diſcourſe than our common tranſlation. There ſeems, at leaſt to me, to be nothing in the context to lead us to render απ αρχη, either by *beginning*, or *firſt-fruits*. I am, gentlemen,

Your very humble ſervant,

W. F.

THE

Theological Repoſitory.

Eſſays on the Harmony of the Evangeliſts, continued from p. 251.

Essay V.

A Computation of the Time that was neceſſary for the Purpoſe of Chriſt's miniſtry.

THE greateſt objection that can be made to the hypotheſis, of our Lord's miniſtry having continued no longer than a year, or a year and a few months, ariſes from the ſuppoſed impoſſibility of crowding the buſineſs of the evangelical hiſtory into ſo ſmall a compaſs. The more effectually to anſwer this objection, I ſhall briefly go over the whole hiſtory of Chriſt, and collect all the *notes of time* that I can find in it. This I did at firſt, in order to judge of the *poſſibility* of the ſcheme; but the reſult of my obſervations convinced me of the great *probability* of it, independent of all other arguments. For when I found that every thing related of the public miniſtry of Chriſt fell with eaſe within theſe limits, I was ſenſible that more

more time would have been both unneceſſary, and an incumbrance to the ſcheme. Whether this kind of evidence will have the ſame weight with my reader, I cannot tell. I ſhall lay before him the reſult of my obſervations, that he may judge for himſelf.

It can hardly be ſuppoſed, for the reaſons given in a preceding eſſay, that after the firſt paſſover (which according to Mr. Mann, fell on Monday, the 2d of April, that year) Jeſus ſpent more than one ſabbath in Judea, before his arrival in Galilee. Where he ſpent that ſabbath (the 7th of April) is not ſaid; but as all the known events, that intervened between this ſabbath, and that which he ſpent at Capernaum, are his journey through Samaria, two days ſtay at Sychar (which, agreeable to a mode of ſpeaking uſual in the ſcriptures, may, perhaps, only mean part of two days, or little more than a night) and his interview with the nobleman at Cana, we may well ſuppoſe that this laſt mentioned was the 14th, and that he arrived at that place on the day before, when he called Peter and John, &c.

This was the ſabbath on which Jeſus healed the demoniac in the ſynagogue, and Peter's wife's mother at Peter's own houſe, with many other ſick perſons; which gave riſe to his very great fame in that place, Mark i. 28; ſo that, in order to avoid the prodigious concourſe of people that crowded to him upon the occaſion, he retired early the next morning (Sunday the 15th) into the neighbouring deſert, whither his diſ-

diſciples reſorted to him, and from whence he viſited the places in that diſtrict.

On this excurſion from Capernaum, it appears from Mark ii. 1. that he was abſent only *a few days*. Now if we admit theſe few days to be a week; which is more than ſufficient, conſidering that we have no account of any intervening events, except the ſermon on the mount, and the cure of the leper, we may fix his return for the Sunday following, or April the twenty-ſecond.

The day on which the diſciples plucked the ears of corn, I ſuppoſe to have been the next ſabbath, as the tranſactions will eaſily admit of it; for, excepting the time that was taken up in croſſing the ſea of Tiberias, and returning to Capernaum, we have no events, but what are expreſsly confined to two or three days.

Immediately on his entering Capernaum, he healed the centurion's ſervant, and the very next day, Luke vii. 11. (Monday the 23d) he was at Nain, where he raiſed the widow's ſon. I can hardly help thinking, but that Jeſus did not perform this journey on foot; for it ſeems to have been about twenty miles, which is rather too far for him to have walked conveniently. It is an objection, however, to this ſuppoſition, that *many of Jeſus's diſciples* and *much people* are ſaid to have gone with him, Luke vii. 11. There is a great difference, indeed, in the maps of the Holy Land, with reſpect to the ſituation of Nain. In ſome of them it is placed to the eaſt, and in ſome to the weſt of Nazareth; though moſt of them place it to the eaſt. According

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to both it was about the ſame diſtance from Capernaum; but according to the latter it was more conveniently ſituated for croſſing the ſea to Gadara; being about half way between Nazareth and the ſouthern part of the ſea of Galilee.

I conclude, that very little time elapſed between Jeſus's return to Capernaum, and his croſſing the ſea to Gadara, becauſe Matthew connects theſe two events together, ſaying, viii. 18. that, *when he ſaw great multitudes he went to the other ſide of the ſea.* Admitting that he ſet out from Nain early the next morning (Tueſday the 24th) in the ſame mode of travelling in which he had come to Nain, he might eaſily have got to the other ſide of the ſea before night. The ſtorm they met with may as well be ſuppoſed to have quickened, as to have retarded their paſſage; and probably it was not of long continuance, as they would naturally awake Jeſus on the firſt apprehenſion of danger. That ſea is but about five or ſix miles over in that place, ſo that the navigation of it could not, in general, exceed an hour.

Conſidering the reaſon why Jeſus had juſt left Capernaum, viz. the crowd, it is not probable that he would ſtay long in Nain, after ſo illuſtrious a miracle as he had performed in that place. It is expreſsly ſaid, that *much people of the city* attended the funeral, and that this miracle occaſioned a *rumour of him to go throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.* Luke vii 17.

On the other ſide of the ſea it is evident, that our Lord made but little ſtay. The demoniac

niac met him immediately on his landing, Mark v. 2. and as ſoon as ever the cure was performed, and the ſwine drowned, in conſequence of it (which events followed cloſe upon one another, Mark v. 13.) the people of the country urged him to depart.

Upon the ſuppoſition that he landed in the evening, he might ſet ſail about ſun-ſet; and as it was about full moon, there would be no difficulty in reaching Capernaum before morning (Wedneſday the 25th) the diſtance being only twelve or fifteen miles. So that the events of the buſy day on which he called Matthew, might happen on that very day; and then we ſhall be at a loſs how to diſpoſe of Jeſus till the ſabbath following, on which the diſciples plucked the ears of corn. If, therefore, any of the preceding events ſeem to be too crowded, we may ſuppoſe that he arrived at Capernaum on the Thurſday, or even on the Friday.

I ſee no reaſon to ſuppoſe, with ſome, that the entertainment which Matthew made for Jeſus, mentioned Matt. ix. 10. and Luke v. 29. was on a different day from that on which that apoſtle was called. The very next words that follow the account of Matthew's riſing and following Jeſus are, *And as he was at meat in the houſe.* Luke, indeed, ſuppoſes, that Matthew made *a great feaſt* on purpoſe for him; but it might be a day on which he expected ſome of his friends, and was already prepared: or, ſuppoſing that this feaſt was made on purpoſe to entertain Jeſus, we have room enough for it. Our Lord might land at Capernaum early in the morning, and, after healing the ſick of the

palſy, be walking by the ſea ſide, and call Matthew long before noon; ſo that before evening there was time enough to make any entertainment, and invite his friends. During that entertainment was the diſcourſe with the diſciples of John, and during that diſcourſe Jairus waited upon Jeſus; and the raiſing of his daughter, healing the woman who had the bloody iſſue by the way, giving ſight to two blind men, and curing a demoniac, compriſe all the remaining events of the day; and they are no more than might eaſily fall within the compaſs of a day. Admitting, however, that theſe events took up two days, it appears that we have even three days for them.

As to Matthew's *accompts*, which have been urged by ſome; for any thing that we know, they might have been ſettled in an hour. Perhaps, having juſt made his payments, they required no ſettling at all; or that buſineſs might have been done by means of a friend. The ſtory is ſo told, that we cannot but ſuppoſe, that Matthew became a follower of Jeſus from the very day on which he was called. The ſons of Zebedee immediately left their father, their nets, and every thing, and followed Jeſus forthwith: and why ſhould we allow Matthew any longer reſpite?

If, with Luke, we ſuppoſe the ſabbath on which Jeſus healed the man who had the withered hand, not to have been the ſame with that on which the diſciples plucked the ears of corn (though I think it moſt probable that they were the ſame, ſee p. 123) we ſhall not be in the leaſt embarraſſed with reſpect to this harmony; for

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as this evangeliſt mentions no events as happening between theſe ſabbaths, and gives no note whereby we can fix the time of them, we may ſuppoſe that they were mentioned in the ſame place, becauſe the tranſactions in them were ſimilar, and not becauſe they were contiguous. We may, therefore, ſuppoſe that one of the ſabbaths was the 21ſt of April, the 12th or 19th of May, or, indeed, any ſabbath during our Lord's ſtay in Galilee.

If we conſider the events that paſſed between this ſabbath on which the diſciples plucked the ears of corn, and on which Jeſus healed the man with the withered hand, and the ſabbath on which he was rejected at Nazareth, we ſhall not ſee the leaſt reaſon to ſuppoſe that any other intervened between them; for we have no more tranſactions than are expreſsly limited to one day, and hints of what might require two or three.

Having incurred the violent reſentment of the phariſees, by the tranſactions of the laſt mentioned ſabbath, Jeſus retired into a deſert place, whither the multitudes followed him, and he healed them, Matt. xii. 15. At this time, alſo, he ſet apart the twelve apoſtles, Mark iii. 13.

Admitting that theſe things took up Sunday, Monday, and Tueſday; Wedneſday the ſecond of May, will be the day on which he cured the blind and dumb demoniac, and held the diſcourſe by the ſea-ſide, as recited in the preceding view of the Harmony, p. 101. On Thurſday, therefore, he might ſet out for Nazareth, and reach it the next day.

From the ſabbath on which he was rejected at Nazareth, May fifth, to the feaſt of pentecoſt, which was on Wedneſday, May the 23d, we have two weeks and three days, and no account of any tranſactions that took up more than three or four days, except the miſſion of the twelve, which, as I have ſhown, p. 59, could not well take up more than a week.

Suppoſing the miſſion to have been on Sunday the ſixth of May, the return may be fixed for Sunday the 13th; and on the day following, Monday the 14th, Jeſus might feed the five thouſand, be ſeen walking on the ſea that night, and hold the diſcourſe concerning bread the day following, Tueſday the 15th.

As the moon changed on the 14th or 15th of this month, if moon light was abſolutely neceſſary for the diſciples to diſcern Jeſus walking on the ſea, we muſt get another week, by ſuppoſing either that Jeſus did not ſpend a ſabbath in Judea before his departure for Galilee, or in his firſt abſence from Capernaum; and then, the moon being in her laſt quarter, would give light in the morning. But I do not ſee that the hiſtory at all requires the light of the moon. It is not ſaid at what diſtance Jeſus was ſeen from the ſhip; and it being then the fourth watch of the night, Matt. xiv. 25. it might be about day-break. Beſides, the ſtars, it is probable, give more light in the clearer atmoſphere of Judea, than they generally do with us; and, except in the rainy ſeaſon, the nights are ſeldom cloudy. Or the moon would riſe an hour or two before the ſun, if we ſhorten the miſſion only a day or two.

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If I have acquitted myſelf to the ſatisfaction of my reader in the computation of time for the preceding part of the hiſtory, it muſt, I imagine, be allowed, that every difficulty attending the hypotheſis I am endeavouring to ſupport, is ſurmounted, as far as it depends upon this computation; ſince, in the remainder of the hiſtory, we have fewer facts, and much more time for them. Indeed, it might be expected, that the ſacred hiſtorians would be more circumſtantial in their account of the firſt part of our Lord's miniſtry. The events of it being all new and extraordinary, would make a deep impreſſion on their minds; and each of them, having related an event or diſcourſe of any kind, would have little inducement to relate another that was ſimilar to it, and that occurred later in the hiſtory. But the laſt events in the hiſtory, being much more ſtriking and important than the reſt, are related with great particularity by them all.

From the feaſt of pentecoſt to the feaſt of tabernacles, which was on Thurſday the 27th of September that year, was eighteen weeks; whereas the events belonging to this interval cannot be ſuppoſed to have taken up one half of them.

It doth not appear that Jeſus made any long ſtay at Jeruſalem at this feaſt. The reaſon that is given why he did not chuſe to *walk in Judea* at that time was, that the *Jews ſought to kill him*; and that reſolution was formed on the firſt ſabbath after the feaſt, when he cured the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda.

The firſt event upon record after Jeſus's return to Galilee is his diſcourſe concerning tra-

ditions. Suppoſing this to have been in the neighbourhood of Capernaum, his journey from thence to the coaſt of Tyre and Sydon, being about 60 miles, might take a fortnight or three weeks. As he made this journey in a private manner, which we may infer from his hope of not being known when he entered into a houſe, at the end of his journey, Mark vii. 24. (an expectation which he could not have formed, if he had travelled by ſlow ſtages, preaching and working miracles all the way) and as he is not ſaid to have done any thing in that country, beſides curing the daughter of the Syrophenician woman, we may conclude that the whole excurſion could not have taken up more than the time above mentioned.

After his return we find him travelling through the coaſts of Decapolis, on the eaſtern ſhore of the ſea of Tiberias, where he cured one man who had an impediment in his ſpeech, and another who was blind. And this whole territory did not exceed twenty miles in length, we may allow a week or a fortnight for this progreſs, at the end of which, being in a deſert place, where the multitude had been with him three days, Mark viii. 2. (*i. e.* probably two nights and part of three days) he again fed them by a miracle.

Immediately after this event Jeſus went by ſhip to the parts of Dalmanutha, Mark viii. 10. or Magdala, Matt. xv. 39. on the ſame ſide of the ſea, where he diſcourſed with the phariſees concerning the ſign from heaven. After this he croſſed the ſea, and at Bethſaida cured

red a blind man. For theſe events a week may certainly be deemed more than ſufficient.

The next journey we have an account of is to Cæſarea Philippi, about forty miles; when, by the way, he began to foretell his ſufferings, which is expreſsly ſaid to have been ſix days before the transfiguration, Matt. xvii. 1. on a mount near Capernaum. If we allow a fortnight for this excurſion, we ſhall have found events for no more than ſix or eight of the ſeventeen weeks that he was in Galilee at this time, allowing one week for his journey to and from Jeruſalem. For from the transfiguration to our Lord's taking his final leave of Galilee, nothing is ſaid to have happened but the cure of the demoniacal child at the foot of the mount, and ſome diſcourſes at Capernaum in that neighbourhood. However, as Jeſus did not ſet out for this feaſt till after his brethren were gone up, John vii. 3. and did not arrive at Jeruſaſalem till about the middle of it, v. 14. (going perhaps for the greater privacy, by the country beyond Jordan, Matt. xix. 1. we may allow a few days more for his ſtay in Galilee at this time.

A very few days might ſuffice for all that paſſed at Jeruſalem at the feaſt of tabernacles, as it conſiſted chiefly of diſcourſes with the Jews, related in the eighth and ninth chapters of John.

What paſſed between this feaſt and the feaſt of dedication, nine weeks afterwards, we are no where informed; ſo that, to fill up this chaſm, I have been obliged to inſert in this place all

thoſe diſcourſes and incidents mentioned by Luke, which I did not know how to diſpoſe of better. It is probable, that the manner in which our Lord paſſed his time in Judea was ſo ſimilar to the preceding part of his miniſtry in Galilee, that the evangeliſts, who all appear to have ſtudied conciſeneſs, thought it ſuperfluous to relate the particulars. There is, however, an abſolute ſilence in all of them from this time, till within a few weeks before our Lord's death; except that John only mentions a few particulars of what paſſed at the feaſt of dedication, ch. x.

All that is ſaid to have paſſed between the feaſt of dedication and the laſt paſſover, an interval of more than ſixteen weeks, are the diſcourſes beyond Jordan, the journey from thence to raiſe Lazarus, the retreat to Ephraim, and the laſt journey through Jericho to Jeruſalem; all which can hardly be ſuppoſed to have taken up four weeks.

It is by no means neceſſary for me to go over the remainder of the hiſtory, as all Harmoniſts are agreed with reſpect to the time in which it was compriſed, though they differ in their arrangement of particular facts. Not but that a review of the hiſtory of the laſt week before our Lord's death, would be favourable to the hypotheſis I am endeavouring to ſupport, as it would exhibit a ſcene of much more buſineſs than I have had occaſion to bring into any two weeks before.

It certainly appears, upon the whole, that one year was abundantly ſufficient for all the events

events recorded in the evangelical hiſtory. No perſon, reading Matthew, Mark or Luke, could poſſibly have imagined that they took up more; and every thing is perfectly eaſy in John, admitting the tranſpoſition of one chapter, the preſent connection of which evidently ſhows it to be out of its proper place; and the interpolation of the word *paſſover* before *feaſt of the Jews*; a miſtake ſo eaſy, in ſome early tranſcriber (by taking into the text a marginal illuſtration of ſome perſon, who raſhly ſuppoſed the *paſſover* was the feaſt referred to) and ſo much like other miſtakes, that are generally ſuppoſed to have been made, ſince theſe books came from the hands of the original writers, that a much ſmaller advantage than is here propoſed by it would juſtify us in admitting it. In fact, other critics have admitted it for different, and leſs weighty reaſons. There are perſons, however, who would not alter the preſent copies of the New Teſtament, though they were obliged to ſuppoſe, that the public miniſtry of Chriſt laſted *forty* years inſtead of *four*, which is the general hypotheſis.

I ſhall conclude this eſſay with obſerving, that, according to the preceding diſpoſition of our Lord's hiſtory, we have an eaſy plan of his public miniſtry, and obſerve a pretty equal diſtribution of his labours, to inſtruct and convert the people of the Jews. For almoſt all the former half of the year was ſpent in Galilee, and the latter in Judea.

Galilee is a country of about forty miles in length, lying eaſt and weſt, and about fifteen, or

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in ſome places twenty miles in breadth. Cana is ſituated in the weſtern part of it, Nazareth about the center, and Capernaum in the eaſt. This part of the country was, probably, the moſt populous, being ſituated upon the ſea of Galilee, which employed a great number of ſhips.

Our Lord ſpent all the early part of his life at Nazareth; but probably was not conſpicuous. He began to work miracles at Cana in the weſt, but preſently, leaving that place, he ſpent the firſt part of his public preaching in the more populous country about Capernaum in the eaſt; after he had opened his commiſſion, as we may ſay, in Judea, and eſpecially in the parts near Jordan, where John had borne witneſs of him, and pointed him out to the people.

During the firſt weeks of his preaching in Capernaum and the neighbourhood, he was cloſely attended by his diſciples, who may be ſuppoſed not to be yet qualified to preach themſelves. But before he left Galilee for that time, he removed to Nazareth, and its neighbourhood; where the people muſt have been in ſome meaſure prepared to receive him; and not having much time to ſpend there, he ſent out the twelve apoſtles, two and two, to aſſiſt him in going over that country, which ſeems to have been but thinly inhabited.

After Pentecoſt our Lord made a progreſs through *Trachonitis*, and to the utmoſt northern boundary of the land of Canaan, towards Tyre and Sydon. During this part of his ſtay in Galilee, it is not improbable but that his diſciples

ciples might aſſiſt him in preaching the goſpel, though it be not particularly mentioned.

Taking his final leave of Galilee, Jeſus ſent out ſeventy diſciples, to preach in the larger country of Judea. He alſo ſeveral times viſited the country beyond Jordan; nor was Samaria by any means neglected by him.

Upon the whole, all the country that was formerly poſſeſſed by the twelve tribes, may be ſuppoſed to have been pretty equally enlightened by the preaching of the goſpel, and to have enjoyed nearly equal advantages, during the courſe of our Lord's public preaching.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

Dr. Duchal's *Letter to Dr.* Taylor *on* the Doctrine of Atonement *having fallen into my hands, I ſend it to you, as what, I doubt not, you will judge worthy of a place in your* Repoſitory. *I preſume, that the world in general, and Dr. Taylor's friends in particular, will not deem it diſhonourable to make public a private correſpondence upon a ſubject ſo important and intereſting, but will be pleaſed with the judicious obſervations of ſo eminent a perſon as Dr. Duchal.*

I am, gentlemen, your's, &c.

C. R.

A Letter from the Rev. Dr. Duchal *of Dublin, to the Rev. Dr.* Taylor *of Norwich.*

Dear Sir,

TO you it muſt have a ſtrange appearance, that I have delayed ſo long to anſwer your letter, and perhaps I ſhall appear no leſs trifling in the anſwer I give than I have been in deferring it ſo long. However, I ſhall not add to my fault by a tedious apology, which, if made at all, muſt be taken from circumſtances, which it would ſerve no ſort of purpoſe to communicate. I ſhall, therefore, proceed to make ſome friendly obſervations on your book concerning atonement.

Your

Your ſentiments with reſpect to the efficacy of the ſufferings and death of our bleſſed Saviour, are, in a few words, ſo fully and clearly expreſſed in p. 91 and 92, that I think it not needful to quote any other paſſages. "I conclude, therefore, that the ſacrifice of Chriſt "was truly and properly, in the higheſt degree, "and far beyond any other, piacular and expiatory, "to make atonement for, or to take away ſin. "Not only to give us an example; not only to "aſſure us of the remiſſion, or to procure our "Lord a commiſſion to publiſh the forgiveneſs "of ſin; but, moreover, to obtain that for"giveneſs, by doing what God, in his wiſdom, "judged fit and expedient to be done, in order "to the forgiveneſs of ſin, and *without which*, "*he* did not think it fit and expedient to grant "the forgiveneſs of ſin."

Now, Sir, it is certain, that God cannot do what is not fit and expedient to be done. And, if it was not fit and expedient to forgive ſin without the interpoſition of ſuch an expiation or atonement, then that atonement was really neceſſary to our obtaining pardon. This ſeemeth to me, to be preſſed with great difficulties.

That God would forgive ſin to the truly penitent and reformed, muſt have been an article of natural religion in all ages, and a fundamental article too. For ſurely if there was not hope of pardon upon repentance and reformation, deſpair muſt neceſſarily ſeize and poſſeſs every offender, that is, every man, and there muſt have been an end of all religion. But, on the contrary, how naturally muſt men be led, from juſt notions of the goodneſs of God, and from the

the univerſal, moſt compaſſionable infirmity and imperfection of human nature, to believe, that God would be merciful to the penitent, and receive them into favour? And, how aſtoniſhing muſt the ſeverity of the divine adminiſtration appear, if it ſhould have been ſuppoſed to cut off all offenders, however penitent, and ſo the whole human race, without exception, from mercy and forgiveneſs? It ſeems to have been impoſſible, that any wiſe men could ever have entertained ſuch a notion; and therefore, they muſt neceſſarily have fallen into the other with much aſſurance, viz. that God would graciouſly forgive the ſincerely penitent. Now, however ſhocking the ſeverity juſt mentioned may appear, it ſeems to follow in a juſt conſequence from this principle, that ſomething abſolutely independent of the offenders, and which will be allowed to be voluntary in the ſupreme mind, (in this ſenſe of the word *voluntary*, that he might have withheld it) was requiſite to make it fit and expedient for him to pardon. For, had he withheld it, no pardon could have been granted. We are, in the holy ſcriptures, repreſented as under the greateſt poſſible obligations to the goodneſs of God, for ſending his only begotten ſon into the world, to ſuffer and die for us; and can this be the meaning of it, that we are under the greateſt obligations to him for doing a thing, which, if he had not done, his own adminiſtration would have been ſevere and rigorous, and unworthy of himſelf.

Add to this, that there can be nothing more plain, than that mankind, in this world, are placed

placed in a ſtate of diſcipline, in which it is intended that, from the firſt beginnings and rudiments of virtue, they ſhould make progreſs towards a ſtate of maturity and perfection, daily correcting what hath been amiſs, growing in good affections, and advancing in holineſs. Now, in ſuch a ſtate, the forgiveneſs of faults and follies, upon repentance and reformation, ſeemeth to be really eſſential to the deſign of that ſtate, an eſſential part of it rather, and to follow it as naturally as light and ſhadows go together. If there be no forgiveneſs, it is in vain to ſpeak of diſcipline in creatures morally imperfect. Theſe are ſome of the difficulties which preſs the opinion, that there was a fitneſs and expediency in forgiving ſin in purſuance of an atonement or expiation, ſuch, that without that atonement, God did not think it fit and expedient to forgive ſin, in other words, would not, and could not, have done it; ſo that in fact, had not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt come into the world, and ſuffered and died for us, or ſome other atonement which would have anſwered the end, been made, there would have been no forgiveneſs.

Your ſenſe of the value of our Saviour's atoning ſacrifice in the ſight of the Father, and of the efficacy of it as lying in a character, and in the moſt conſummate merit that ever was exhibited on the theatre of this world, is liable to no ſort of objection, as far as I ſee; nor yet is this principle, that the merit of one perſon may be profitable to others, and procure for them certain favours from the ſupreme ruler, which

which they would not otherwiſe have enjoyed; of which you have, in ſeveral places, given inſtances directly to the point. But, the great queſtion in the preſent caſe is, how far this is to be carried? We may, indeed, conſider the forgiveneſs of ſin under the notion of a mere indemnity, and of delivering the offender from the pains and penalties he hath incurred, without his being reſtored to the love and favour of God. But, I think, this is never the meaning of the word *pardon*, in the New Teſtament, which always, as far as I have obſerved, and can remember, ſignifies not only freeing men from deſerved puniſhment, but taking them into the favour and love of God. If this be a juſt repreſentation of the matter, it ought to be carefully attended to. For, undoubtedly, nothing can recommend an offender to the favour and love of God, but ſincere repentance, that is, a new character. Here, our ideas ſeem to be clear, and without all perplexity. God can love nothing but what is in itſelf lovely; and, as he will always love what is in itſelf lovely as ſuch, ſo his love will be in proportion to what is amiable in the object. Here, nothing can determine the ſupreme mind leſs or more, but the quality of the object. No merit of any other perſon can have any place. By the merit of one, certain favours may be procured for another; but love can never be ſo procured. It follows perſonal worth, and that only, and always in proportion to the degree of it. So that, in reality, ſo far as the remiſſion of ſin ſignifieth being reſtored to the love of God, nothing

thing can effect this, but the putting on the new man, and an amiable character. No atonement whatever can have the leaſt influence here. I own, we may imagine to ourſelves, on the other hand, a perſon by ſincere repentance and attaining to a new character, ſuppoſe an eminent one, become the object of his Maker's love, and yet caſt into a ſtate of condemnation and puniſhment for the ſin and evil he hath done in his former bad ſtate of mind; and, we ſee in human adminiſtrations, the moſt bitter repentance doth not hinder the laws from having their courſe, and this for very obvious reaſons, and which perfectly ſatisfy the mind. But, when we imagine ſuch a meaſure in the divine adminiſtration, where the ſtate and diſpoſition of the mind are perfectly known, how dreadfully uneaſy doth it ſit upon the human heart? A perſon really the object of God's love, and yet given up to extreme miſery! He is beloved of God, but his treſpaſſes not forgiven him! On the other hand, how agreeable to the heart to believe, that all whom God loveth, ſhall, in proportion as he loveth them, be happy? And, it muſt be owned, to imagine one rule for the exerciſe of the love of God, or for his diſpleaſure, and another rule extremely different for conferring happineſs, or inflicting miſery, is attended with no ſmall difficulties.

But, before I leave this head concerning the efficacy of merit, or eminent virtue in one perſon for procuring favours from God for another, you will allow me to take notice of a paſſage in your book, which, though it does

not come in chap. viii. yet relateth directly to the ſubject. The paſſage is in chap. x. p. 105. "But, pardon in the goſpel is raiſed to a very "high degree, and repentance is there made "available, not only to exempt from puniſh-"ment, but alſo to gain a new and glorious "ſtate of being in eternal life; which ſurely "is a ſtretch of favour far beyond the natural "value of repentance. It may be naturally fit "to continue in a happy ſtate of being un-"blemiſhed virtue, a ſinleſs, ſteady obedience, "which hath done nothing to forfeit, and every "thing in its power to ſecure the bleſſing of "its Maker; but, what claim can a ſinner, de-"ſerving of deſtruction, have to a glorious im-"mortality in the preſence of God, ſuppoſing "he doth repent and reform?" On all this I would obſerve, that there is no natural value in repentance, by which it may be ſaid to deſerve, or have a claim to a happy immortality; and that a ſincere penitent, upon his repentance and reformation, hath, in point of righteouſneſs, *no ſuch demand, can have no ſuch expectation.* But, I imagine, that we are not at all to direct our hopes from the infinite goodneſs of God, or to meaſure them by any apprehended rule of proportionable merit and reward. Suppoſe an unblemiſhed virtue in this life, and a ſteady ſinleſs obedience from firſt to laſt; who can ſay, that there is any proportion between this and an eternal duration in a ſtate of perfect happineſs? It hath, on the contrary, been ſaid, that if God ſhall pleaſe to bring into being, and continue in it for a longer or ſhorter term, perſons,

ſons, whoſe exiſtence was a real bleſſing and happineſs to them, while they poſſeſſed it; it would not at all be unrighteous or hard in their Maker to deprive them of their being, when the deſigned time of their duration was expired, even ſuppoſing they had, through the whole of life, been perfectly innocent. Their being was ſtill a bleſſing to them. You know, ſome writers of great name have declared themſelves of this opinion. The goodneſs of God is, indeed, ſuppoſed to grant perpetuity of exiſtence to the pure and innocent; but, who would claim ſuch an ineſtimable thing as eternal perfect happineſs, in point of righteouſneſs or equity? The matter ſeems to be this; that ſuch as are worthy, and the objects of God's favour, ſhall be continued in exiſtence, and made happy in it, we believe from the infinite goodneſs and liberality of the divine mind. It is quite inconceivable that a God of ſuch goodneſs ſhould voluntarily, and without any neceſſity, extinguiſh the being of perſons who are the objects of his favour. If, indeed, in the vaſtneſs of the creation; if in the immenſity of ſpace, there was not room for them; if he did not know how to diſpoſe of them, or what to do with them, ſuch an extinction of beings, good and worthy, might be imagined; but no otherwiſe. And their continuance for ever in being is a thing, the aſſured hope of which doth not ariſe from any claim in the way of righteouſneſs, but from the love of God to real and ſubſtantial worth. This muſt ever forbid the perſon who is poſſeſſed of it, to apprehend that God will deſtroy his be-

ing. And, in the ſame manner, we cannot but, from the goodneſs and love of God, infer, that, if he continueth ſuch in being, he will make that being happineſs to them. Now let this be applied to the penitent offender, who is become a new character, and lovely in the ſight of his Maker, who perfectly knoweth his thorough converſion, and that this new character will prove an abiding one; and can it be ſuppoſed he will extinguiſh ſuch a being? This would be, in reality, juſt in the ſame manner inconſiſtent with all our notions of love and goodneſs, as in the caſe already put, of one who had not ſinned. In a word, if the hope of immortal, happy exiſtence doth not ſpring from merit and the proportioning of reward to it, which cannot be the caſe, but from the goodneſs and love of the Supreme Being, this hope muſt take place in every inſtance in which a perſon is the object of divine love, and is conſcious to himſelf of thoſe qualities which muſt render him ſo. God is love; and love will never deſtroy its own object in any caſe; and if it preſerveth its object in exiſtence, it will likewiſe unqueſtionably make that exiſtence happy. Let it then be ſuppoſed, that by means of our bleſſed Saviour, and in reſpect to his conſummate merit, we enjoy high eternal advantages, which we ſhould not otherwiſe have enjoyed; yet, on the other hand, *to imagine it poſſible*, that immortal happineſs ſhould not be conferred on the perſons who are not the objects of divine love, is extremely hard. Surely, if love follows the new amiable

amiable character of a ſincere penitent, immortal, happy exiſtence muſt follow that love.

The paragraph which goeth before that from which the laſt quotation is taken, relateth directly to the main ſubject, and the principal difficulty which lieth in our way in treating it. There, p. 104. you ſay, "But, God muſt here be conſidered in a public capacity as a magiſtrate, as the governor of the univerſe; and ſin as the only diſorder, miſchief, and miſery, among his ſubjects, which alone can corrupt and ruin them, and which, therefore, above all things, he muſt be concerned to prevent and reform; now, in this view, are we ſure that a ſimple abſolute pardon, even of the penitent, is agreeable to rectoral goodneſs, and the ends of government, which are the good order and happineſs of the rational creation?" And again, p. 105. "Eaſy, indiſcreet pardons may give encouragement to tranſgreſſion, and forgiveneſs lightly obtained, may give a light opinion of wickedneſs, not only to the offender himſelf, but to all his fellow ſubjects." Here, it may be obſerved, that, according to the goſpel ſcheme, the pardon of the penitent is, in fact, as ſimple, as abſolute, as if there had been no atonement or expiation at all, *i. e.* nothing is required of them but repentance for the remiſſion of ſin. Indeed, if any thing laborious or expenſive had been required of *them*, if any pains or penalties had been inflicted on *them*, it might have been ſaid, that their forgiveneſs was not lightly obtained; but as the goſpel expiation was provided for them, and independent

altogether of them, nay, without ſo much as their knowledge, the pardon *with reſpect to them* is as lightly obtained, as if there had been no ſuch expiation. This is ſo plainly the fact, that there needeth no enlargement. And ſo, if the ſtreſs of the cauſe is laid upon the unfitneſs of *their* obtaining pardon lightly, the unqueſtionable fact overthroweth the argument for expiation taken from it. But let us ſuppoſe, that rectoral goodneſs ſaw it fit to inſiſt on an expiation, fit to anſwer the ends of government, and ſupport the order and happineſs of the moral creation; particularly, that tranſgreſſion might be diſcouraged, and that obtaining forgiveneſs lightly might not give a light opinion of wickedneſs to the offender himſelf or his fellow-ſubjects; the great queſtion is this, what preciſe inſtruction, by the pardoning of ſin in purſuance of an expiation, and not without it, was intended to be conveyed to the offender or his fellow-ſubjects? Is the meaning of it a declaration, that pardon is not at all to be expected without expiation? And, notwithſtanding the moſt ſincere repentance, there ſhall not be any forgiveneſs? That even with reſpect to creatures from the very firſt, in a ſtate of imperfection and diſcipline (for, this muſt be taken in to make the argument concluſive to the point in queſtion) this ſhall be the rule of the divine adminiſtration? If this be the inſtruction intended by it, it hath, indeed, a plain tendency to make the ſubjects of God's moral kingdom afraid of ſinning and breaking his laws; but what is the light in which it ſetteth God's government?

Had

Had not an expiation or atonement been made for me, which was not in my power, and in which no agency of mine could have any influence, it depending entirely upon the will of another, I muſt have for ever deſpaired of pardon, notwithſtanding the moſt ſincere repentance. This ſeemeth to me to be a fair repreſentation, and if ſuch is the inſtruction intended to be given by expiation, it is well worthy of being conſidered ſeriouſly, whether it can in the eye of the moral creation, do honour to God's government, and recommend it to their eſteem, or him to their love; but, if this is not the inſtruction this conſtitution giveth, what is the inſtruction whereby honour is done to our Maker? The plain meaning ſeems to be; you ſhall have pardon, but, you ſhall not have it lightly; and if that is not done which ſhall prevent the imputation of it being lightly given, you ſhall not have it at all. Let it be added to all, that, in the account you give of the particular reaſons why this method of expiation was taken, which appeared to me to be an excellent one, the tendency of what our bleſſed Saviour hath done and ſuffered to deliver us from the power of ſin, and to make us holy in all manner of converſation, is that which you have principally inſiſted upon. It is granted, that the great immediate influence is on us, to bring us to a thorough repentance and reformation of life. And you ſay, very juſtly, that therefore this expiation is honourable on God's part, and doth honour to his government, becauſe it is the moſt effectual means of promoting

repentance and holineſs of life. Is not then repentance, is not reformation of life and holineſs, the direct end of expiation, without which, with reſpect to individuals, it muſt have been fruitleſs and vain? And, will not the whole, at laſt, come to this, that God choſe to forgive ſin in that manner, that might moſt effectually promote repentance and reformation? And, is not the obvious inference from this, that, where repentance and reformation are really found, the great, though not the only end of expiation, and that which rendered it ſo highly honourable to the divine government, is anſwered; and whether men know any thing of it or not, or indeed, whether the expiation and atonement had been made or not, their ſins ſhould have been forgiven them.

Thus, Sir, I have, with the greateſt frankneſs, laid before you, the difficulties which have occurred to my own mind; and, as you will, as a lover of, and an earneſt ſearcher after truth, be pleaſed with this, ſo you will the more readily excuſe my freedom, and eſpecially if any thing improper hath dropped from me, when I have aſſured you, there is nothing in this world I can more earneſtly deſire, than to ſee this matter cleared up in all reſpects. In the mean time, I think the chriſtian world is greatly obliged to you, for the labour you have beſtowed on this important ſubject, which is *indeed not in vain*; for, I am perſuaded, you have furniſhed us with the true key for opening a way through the difficulties that have been thought to attend it. I ſhall, in the remaining part of this tedious letter,

letter, in a few looſe hints, lay before you what hath been ſuggeſted to my thoughts in purſuing your plan.

I do not find that the ſcripture ſaith much concerning the *neceſſity* of expiation and atonement, in order to the forgiveneſs of ſin. That God hath appointed the great expiation by the blood of Chriſt, is evident. And, we ſee, the Jewiſh conſtitution was ſuch, that, without ſhedding of blood there was no remiſſion. But. all will allow, that this conſtitution was poſitive. And, in the patriarchal religion, we do not meet with any ſacrifices for ſin, though there is, in the ſacred records, frequent mention of altars and ſacrifices. We read likewiſe in Luke xxiv. 26, that "Chriſt *ought* to have ſuffered "theſe things, and to enter into his glory." But ſurely, this may refer to a poſitive conſtitution and appointment, and not to any *neceſſity* antecedent to that appointment. If there are any expreſſions in ſcripture which plainly point out an antecedent *neceſſity*, they have eſcaped me. As for that in Rom. iii. 26, your paraphraſe hath cleared the ſenſe of the place, and overthrown the argument raiſed upon it. The truth is, the neceſſity of expiation (and, what is ſaid of neceſſity may be applied to expediency, which amounteth to a moral neceſſity) is a notion which men ſeem to have taken from conſidering the ſufferings and death of Chriſt, as a proper ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God, rather than from any expreſs declarations of ſcripture. Or, they have argued, *a poſteriori*, that ſuch an amazing

amazing thing as the death of our Saviour would never have been, if it was not neceſſary.

But let it be ſuppoſed, that God both could and would have forgiven ſin without any expiation, other than the ſincere repentance of the offender, if no other had, by his infinite wiſdom, been appointed, and would have continued the penitent in exiſtence, and made that exiſtence happy; yet, upon this ſuppoſition, there ſeems to be very noble ends anſwered by the ſacrifice of our Saviour, and which are indeed worthy of ſuch an interpoſition, and ſuch a ſcene of wonders. The plain fact, which cannot be conteſted by any believer, is this, that, our bleſſed Saviour, being obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs, therefore God hath exalted him, given him a name above every name, inveſted him with authority to pardon, and give eternal life to his ſervants; and, in one word, made him the bleſſed channel by which all divine favours and bleſſings flow out to us.

Here was, on our Saviour's part, the moſt conſummate merit that ever was exhibited, and moſt pleaſing to the Father, a merit which approved itſelf in the greateſt trials, and which, without ſuch trials, could not have been ſo conſpicuous. Our Lord was made perfect by his ſufferings. Now the crowning this merit with ſuch peculiar glory and power, was the moſt ſolemn teſtimony the parent of the univerſe could give of his love of virtue and worth, as in his eye the moſt excellent of all things, and that it ſhould always be the object of his favour and care.

To

To this merit we ſee the greateſt reſpect and regard is had which could poſſibly be had. He hath obtained a name above every name, and all things are put under him, he only excepted who did put all things under him. And, on account of his merit, we obtain many favours and privileges which we ſhould not otherwiſe have enjoyed, which layeth us under ſtrong obligations to him.

Again; as this conſtitution of the mediatorial kingdom did the greateſt honour to our Saviour, ſo our receiving the remiſſion of ſin and the bleſſings of the goſpel covenant in this manner, is a conſtant memorial to us of our own unworthineſs, and a wonderful and moſt effectual manner of impreſſing our minds with a juſt ſenſe of ſin. This ſeemeth to be one great, perhaps the principal intention of conferring any favours on the ill-deſerving by a mediator of diſtinguiſhed merit, conſtituted ſuch on account of his merit, and it is very expreſsly intimated in the holy ſcriptures. And I make no doubt to ſay, it is an end worthy of being ſerved by ſuch extraordinary means. For if moral rectitude be the moſt excellent of all things in the creation of God, and which he hath made the ſource of higheſt happineſs, and moral turpitude the moſt deformed and miſerable; to impreſs the mind deeply with this, is the greateſt and moſt important ſervice which *can be done* to moral agents in a ſtate of diſcipline. And therefore, no means which can poſſibly anſwer this end, can be too great to be uſed, nothing that can be done or ſuffered too valuable to anſwer

ſwer it. And a diſpenſation calculated to ſerve this purpoſe, however extraordinary that diſpenſation may be, is perfectly worthy of the wiſdom and goodneſs of God. It is, indeed, no difficult matter in general, to convince men of the evil of ſin in point of ſpeculation, and of the miſery to which it expoſeth them; but the hardeſt thing in the world, *to make them feel this conviction, ſo as to break off their ſins, and turn to true holineſs of life.* And it would ſeem, if there be any ingenuouſneſs of heart left, that nothing can ſo much prepare the mind for this, as conſidering ſeriouſly, that to call and engage us to repentance, this divine perſon came into the world, and ſuffered and died for us. Who would not flee from that unhappy ſtate from which he came to redeem us? Who would not embrace that happineſs to which he came to exalt us? But theſe things are much more fully and ſtrongly expreſſed in your book, and ſo there needeth no enlargement upon them. However, it is undoubtedly to be conſidered as one great end of this mediation, that our minds may be deeply impreſſed with a ſenſe of unworthineſs and guilt, and it ſpeaketh the divine intention to make this impreſſion moſt ſenſible and laſting, that ſuch extraordinary means are uſed. And here I think the greateſt ſtreſs is to be laid. By this conſtitution the parent of our ſpirits hath taken the moſt effectual method of impreſſing our ſpirits as he would have them impreſſed, and to give us *ſuch a ſenſe of things as he would have us ever to retain.* The means uſed, are indeed, moſt amazing, but evidently fit to anſwer the end, and known in experience to be ſo.

As

As to the ſcriptural expreſſions concerning ſacrifices for ſin (evidently the Jewiſh phraſeology) if it ſhould be alledged, that all that is here ſaid concerning mediation doth not come up to the proper and full meaning of them, you have, indeed, furniſhed me with an anſwer. Many of theſe expreſſions are of a figurative kind; and bold and ſtrong figures they are. However, perhaps the cleareſt and ſimpleſt idea of ſacrifice, is, that it is the offering up of a life to the honour of God, and, indeed, in an act of religious worſhip. And ſurely, our Saviour's offering himſelf on the croſs to ſerve the purpoſes of divine goodneſs, by which he did the higheſt poſſible honour to the Father, may be very properly termed a ſacrifice. And may it not be very properly conſidered as a ſacrifice for ſin, inaſmuch as this glorious act of obedience, which was ſo pleaſing to the Father, was performed on the behalf of ſinners, and was the condition upon which he obtained power to pronounce an authoritative pardon. This power was given him as the reward of his conſummate merit, which merit evidently lies as the foundation of the whole chriſtian œconomy.

I am, dear Sir,

Your moſt affectionate,

and obedient ſervant,

J. DUCHAL.

An Attempt to prove that the Reſurrection takes Place immediately after Death.

THOUGH all chriſtians agree that there is a future ſtate, we find a conſiderable difference among them with reſpect to the time when this ſtate ſhall begin and be perfected. I intend, therefore, to examine theſe opinions, and then eſtabliſh what ſeems to be the ſcriptural account of the matter.

As to the Popiſh doctrine of purgatory, I find no difficulty about it, being entirely without foundation in ſcripture, hurtful to the cauſe of virtue and religion, and calculated only to ſtrengthen the power and gratify the avarice of the clergy. Paſſing this, then, I ſhall examine the common opinion concerning a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, viz. That immediately after death, the ſoul being ſeparated from the body, ſhall appear in the world of ſpirits, ſtand before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, and receive a ſentence either of juſtification or condemnation, according to the deeds done in the body. That this ſentence ſhall be paſſed upon them, and executed in ſuch a manner, that the ſpirits of juſt men ſhall immediately paſs into glory, and the poſſeſſion of ſuch happineſs as is, at preſent, beyond our conceptions; and that the ſouls of wicked men ſhall, in like manner, enter into a ſtate of inconceivable miſery; where both ſhall remain until the end of the world. When Chriſt ſhall come again and raiſe their bodies

bodies out of the duſt, every ſoul being united to its own body, and every body changed in ſuch a manner as that they may exiſt for ever in happineſs or miſery; that, after this reſurrection, there ſhall be a general judgment and a righteous ſentence paſſed upon every one, and executed in ſuch a manner, that the righteous ſhall then obtain a degree of happineſs vaſtly ſuperior to what they enjoyed in a ſtate of ſeparation from the body; and the wicked, in like manner, ſhall ſuffer a much greater degree of puniſhment than ever they did before; both of which ſhall be eternal. The greater part of chriſtians ſeem to be of this opinion.

With this I have fully been ſatisfied until of late, when, upon a ſerious and impartial review of the ſubject, the following difficulties aroſe in my way:

Firſt, If every one ſhall be judged, and a righteous ſentence paſſed upon them immediately after death, I can ſee no reaſon, conſiſtent with divine wiſdom, why they ſhould be judged a ſecond time, at the end of the world. If there could be an error in the firſt judgment, there might then be a neceſſity for another; but, this can never be the caſe; ſhall not the judge of all the earth do right? Shall the firſt judgment only relate to men's actions in this world, and the ſecond only to their conduct in another? This might be very proper and conſiſtent, if the ſtate of ſeparation after death was to be a ſtate of probation, like the preſent; but this is not the caſe. At the ſecond judgment, it is allowed, that every individual perſon, and every action

action ſhall be tried, and the ſentence impartial as well as the firſt. To what purpoſe, then, is the laſt judgment? Shall heaven and hell be emptied of their inhabitants after they have been juſtly rewarded and puniſhed for thouſands of years? Shall there be again a ſolemn trial whether they deſerved ſuch treatment, or not? How contrary is this to the order of judicial proceedings amongſt men? Or, ſhall the laſt judgment be appointed only to renew and confirm the ſentence of the firſt? No, ſurely. But, perhaps it will be ſaid, that the general judgment is appointed to convince the whole world, that God's dealings with men are juſt and equitable. But what neceſſity is there for a ſecond judgment to anſwer this end? For if every man, at death, receives a righteous ſentence from the Supreme Judge, he will, no doubt, that moment be convinced of its equity with reſpect to himſelf; and this, I think, is ſufficient, unleſs our curioſity muſt be gratified, ſo far as to give us particular information how God deals with every individual of his ſubjects. This is ſuch an impertinent curioſity, as, I believe, never will take place. If I am fully ſatisfied of the equity of *my own* ſentence, I ſhall never entertain the leaſt ſuſpicion of his being unjuſt towards others. But, notwithſtanding all theſe difficulties, if I could find the doctrine of a firſt judgment at death, and a ſecond at the end of the world, clearly revealed in the ſcripture, I ſhould readily give my aſſent to it, though I could not underſtand the reaſons for both. But this is far from being the caſe.

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The inſpired writers tell us, in the plaineſt terms, and very frequently too, that there will be a judgment; but no where, that I remember, do they ever mention that we ſhall be judged twice. From all which it would appear to me, that either the future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments will immediately ſucceed death; or that men ſhall neither be rewarded or puniſhed till the laſt and general judgment.

But, ſecondly, with reſpect to the reſurrection of the ſame individual body immediately before the laſt judgment, I am in great doubts. 1ſt, It is certain the human body is in a perpetual flux; the ſame quantity of matter, and the ſame individual particles are continually changing; the living fœtus in the womb proceeds from ſmall beginnings; when born into the world it daily increaſes, through infancy and youth, till manhood; from thence it declines to old age. In one period it is delicate, beautiful and ſtrong, in another it is worn out with infirmities and covered with deformities, even in the ſame age. How different is it in ſickneſs and in health? Now, ſeeing that is the caſe, I am at a loſs to know what is underſtood by the reſurrection of the ſame individual body. Is it that exact quantity of matter which conſtitutes our bodies at the inſtant of death? If ſo, why ſhould the ſame individual particles of matter be raiſed rather than thoſe which did, at any other time, belong to the body? It is affirmed by ſome, that theſe bodies muſt riſe, in order to ſhare in the rewards and puniſhments of a future ſtate. But that is extremely fooliſh; for if theſe were

capable of being rewarded and puniſhed, why were they not treated in this manner all along, as well as the ſouls to which they belonged? But the truth is, bodies are incapable of either rewards or puniſhments, and, therefore, the reſurrection of the ſame individual body, is unneceſſary for that end. I ſhall not, at preſent, repeat all the difficulties and abſurdities with which the reſurrection of the ſame body is evidently connected, eſpecially conſidering that the ſcriptures affirm no ſuch doctrine. The apoſtle Paul, who has given us the cleareſt and fulleſt account of this ſubject, plainly denies the reſurrection of the ſame individual body. After proving the certainty of a future ſtate againſt ſome in the church of Corinth, who denied it, in the fifteenth chapter of his firſt epiſtle, he introduces an objection in theſe words, *But ſome men will ſay, How are the dead raiſed up, and with what bodies do they come*; he anſwers, *Thou fool, that which thou ſoweſt is not quickened except it die*, *i. e.* the grain you ſow in the earth, muſt firſt die before any other grains of the ſame kind ſpring out of it, *and that which thou ſoweſt, thou ſoweſt not* that *body that ſhall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or ſome other grain, but God giveth it a body, as it hath pleaſed him; and to every ſeed his own body.* Now it is evident, that the ſeed ſown, and the grain that ſprings from it, or is produced by it, are two different things; ſo are the preſent and future bodies of men. Then he ſhews at the thirty-ninth ver. that all the different kinds of animals have bodies formed in a manner exactly ſuited to their different natures

tures and conditions of life: *All fleſh is not the ſame fleſh: but there is one kind of fleſh of men, another fleſh of beaſts, another of fiſhes, and another of birds.* Now, his argument is this, If God has formed ſome bodies to walk and creep upon the earth, others to fly in the open air, and ſome to ſwim in the watery element, he can alſo make bodies fit for the inviſible and heavenly world; then he adds in the following verſe, that, *there are bodies celeſtial, and bodies terreſtrial*; there are heavenly bodies as well as earthly, and theſe are vaſtly different from one another; the glory of the celeſtial is one thing, and the glory of the terreſtrial is another thing. *There is one glory of the ſun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the ſtars; and ſo alſo is the reſurrection of the dead, i. e.* in the other world men ſhall have bodies exactly fitted to the region they inhabit. Then he ſhews the vaſt difference between our preſent bodies, and thoſe we ſhall have in a future ſtate, or at the reſurrection. *It is ſown a corruptible body, it is raiſed in incorruption; it is ſown in diſhonour, it is raiſed in glory; it is ſown in weakneſs, it is raiſed in power; it is ſown a natural body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual body*; then he adds, ver. 50. *Now this I ſay, brethren, that fleſh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.* Now, if the bodies of men at the reſurrection ſhall differ ſo far, both in quantity and quality, as it evidently appears they will, I cannot conceive how it can be ſaid, with any propriety of language, that theſe individual bodies ſhall be raiſed immediately before the

general judgment, in order to render our happineſs complete.

The reſurrection of the body, therefore, according to ſcripture, ſeems to be our entrance into celeſtial bodies, quite different from the preſent, as the apoſtle obſerves, 2 Cor. v. 1. *For we know that if our earthly houſe of this tabernacle, viz.* the preſent body, *was diſſolved, we have a building of God,* another body, *an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this* (body) *we groan earneſtly, deſiring to be clothed upon, with an houſe* (or body) *which is from heaven.* It ſeems evident to me, therefore, that as there is but one reſurrection, and one judgment, ſo theſe muſt either immediately ſucceed death, or they muſt be delayed till the ſecond coming of Chriſt. But, according to the general opinion of chriſtians, theſe grand events are removed to a great diſtance, and placed at the end of the world, which, of conſequence, gives us no hopes of any happineſs till that time comes.

Thirdly, I find in ſcripture, that all the promiſes of future happineſs are to be accompliſhed only at the reſurrection, and the coming of Chriſt. Our Saviour being once invited by one of the chief phariſees to eat bread on the ſabbath day; when he was come into the houſe he ſaid unto him, *When thou makeſt a dinner or a ſupper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinſmen, nor thy rich neighbours, leſt they alſo bid thee again, and a recompenſe be made unto thee; but when thou makeſt a feaſt, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou ſhalt be bleſſed; for they*

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cannot recompenſe thee; for thou ſhalt be recompenſed at the reſurrection of the juſt. Luke xiv. 12—14. There is no mention of an intermediate ſtate of happineſs between death and the reſurrection. In like manner he obſerves, in anſwer to the ſadduces, that *they which ſhall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the reſurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the reſurrection.* Luke xx. 35, 36. Here it ſeems evident, that the other world and the reſurrection are the ſame, and ſhall begin at the ſame time. *This is the will of him that ſent me, that every one that ſeeth the ſon, and believeth on him, may have everlaſting life; and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day.* John vi. 40. The everlaſting life, here promiſed, is to begin only at the laſt day, at the reſurrection. In the ſeventh chapter of Matthew, 22, 23. our Saviour obſerves, that certain men, endowed with miraculous gifts, but of wicked lives would entertain ſtrong expectations from him, even at the day of judgment; *Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord! Lord! have we not propheſied in thy name? and in thy name caſt out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profeſs unto them, I never knew you; depart from me all ye that work iniquity.* This ſentence will be paſſed upon them in the day of judgment. Their ſtate will then only be fixed; but a judgment immediately at death, and another at the end of the world, can lay

no foundation for the groundleſs pretenſions of ſuch wicked men.

Our Lord exhorts his diſciples, *Let your loins be girded about with truth, and your lights burning, and ye yourſelves like unto men that wait for their Lord. Bleſſed are thoſe ſervants whom the Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find watching; verily I ſay unto you, that he ſhall gird himſelf, and make them to ſit down at meat, and will come forth and ſerve them; and if he ſhall come in the ſecond watch, or come in the third watch and find them ſo, bleſſed are thoſe ſervants. And this know, that if the good man of the houſe had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not ſuffered his houſe to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready alſo, for the ſon of man cometh at an hour when ye think not. Then Peter ſaid unto him, Lord ſpeakeſt thou this parable to us, or even to all? And the Lord ſaid, Who then is that faithful and wiſe ſteward, whom his Lord ſhall make ruler over his houſhhold, to give them their portion of meat in due ſeaſon. Bleſſed is that ſervant whom his Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find ſo doing; of a truth, I ſay unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath. But if that ſervant ſay in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; and ſhall begin to beat the men-ſervants and maidens, and to eat and drink and be drunken, the Lord of that ſervant ſhall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him aſunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.* Luke xii. 36—46.

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The apoſtle Paul informs us, that, *there is a day of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every one according to his deeds; to them who, by a patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glory, honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteouſneſs, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that doeth evil.* But when ſhall theſe things come to paſs? he adds, *in the day when God ſhall judge the ſecrets of men by Jeſus Chriſt.* Rom. ii. 5, 6. Now, in all theſe paſſages, there is no mention of any happineſs between death and the coming of Chriſt, and therefore we are exhorted to fix our joyful expectations upon that intereſting period. *Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Chriſt in God; when Chriſt, who is our life, ſhall appear, then ſhall ye alſo appear with him in glory.* Col. iii. 2, 3, 4. *The grace of God, that bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared unto all men, teaching us, that denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent world, looking for that bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* Titus ii. 11—13. *Be patient, therefore, brethren,* ſaith the apoſtle James, *unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the huſbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye, therefore, alſo patient; ſtabliſh your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth near. Grudge not one againſt another, brethren, leſt ye be*

condemned. Behold, the judge ſtandeth before the door. James v. 7, 8, 9. *Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind; be ſober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt.* 1 Peter i. 13. *And now, little children, abide in him, that when he ſhall appear, we may have confidence, and not be aſhamed before him at his coming.* 1 John ii. 28. In ſhort, we find no reward promiſed in the goſpel till Chriſt ſhall come. *Behold I come quickly,* ſays he, *and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work ſhall be.* Rev. xxii. 12. Accordingly we find the martyrs, under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, directed all their hopes to the reſurrection, as the apoſtle obſerves to the Hebrews. *Women received their dead raiſed to life again, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better reſurrection.* Heb. xi. 35.

To this period the primitive chriſtians directed all their hopes under perſecution. *If ſo be we ſuffer with Chriſt, we ſhall alſo be glorified together. For I reckon that the ſufferings of this preſent time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that ſhall be revealed in us. For the earneſt expectation of the creature, waiteth for the manifeſtation of the ſons of God: for the creature was made ſubject to vanity* (or death) *not willingly, but by reaſon of him who hath ſubjected the ſame in hope.* Now what is that hope? It is a deliverance from corruption; becauſe *the creature itſelf alſo ſhall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God: for we know that the whole creation groaneth*

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and travaileth in pain together until now, (i. e. under theſe mortal bodies) *and not only they, but ourſelves alſo* (the apoſtles) *who have the firſt-fruits of the ſpirit; even we ourſelves groan within ourſelves, waiting for the adoption.* What is that? The reſurrection from the dead, viz. *the redemption of our body.* Rom. viii. 17, &c. This is what he ſo earneſtly deſired and longed for; *that I may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto the reſurrection of the dead.* Phil. iii. 10, 11. And accordingly he died in the full aſſurance of a joyful hope of this happy event. *I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me in that day, and not to me only, but to all them that love his appearing.* 2 Tim. iv. 6, &c. From the whole, then, it ſeems evident, that between death and the reſurrection, or the coming of the ſon of man to judgment, there is no intermediate ſtate of rewards or puniſhments. For the apoſtles of our Saviour expected no ſuch ſtate, neither do they give us any ground to hope for it.

Theſe arguments have prevailed upon me to abandon the common opinion, and ſearch for another, entirely free from theſe difficulties. Accordingly I was led from them into a different way of thinking, and which appeared to be the natural and unavoidable conſequence of the preceding arguments, namely, That death is not only the diſſolution

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of the human body, but alſo a total extinction or ſuſpenſion of all thought, intelligence and activity; that in this ſtate the dead ſhall continue till the end of the world and the ſecond coming of Chriſt, when the ſoul ſhall awake as out of a profound ſleep, and all its faculties be renewed; that then the dead ſhall ariſe out of their graves, appear in judgment, and receive their ſentence according to the deeds done in the body. This I found to be the opinion of many learned and good men, and appears to be favoured by ſeveral paſſages in ſcripture, where the dead are repreſented as in a ſleep, in a ſtate of ſilence, darkneſs, forgetfulneſs, and inactivity. For if all the promiſes of the goſpel, relating to a future ſtate, are directed only to the reſurrection, the coming of Chriſt, and the day of judgment; and if theſe great and intereſting events will happen only at the end of the world, then it evidently follows, that there is no happineſs nor miſery till that time, and, therefore, the ſtate of the dead muſt be a ſtate of inſenſibility. This appéared to me a juſt concluſion; but, upon ſecond thoughts, I found this opinion liable to great difficulties as well as the former.

Firſt; It appears inconſiſtent with the principles of ſound philoſophy. I can form very clear and diſtinct ideas of body and ſpirit, which are the conſtituent parts of human nature; I am acquainted with the qualities of both; the one poſſeſſeſs extenſion, ſolidity, diviſibility, gravity, figure, inactivity, &c. the other thinks, perceives, remembers, reflects, and is active, &c. Theſe qualities are eſſentially different from one another,

another, and, conſequently, ſo are the ſubſtances in which they exiſt. Now, when I ſuppoſe a body that is neither ſolid, nor extended, nor diviſible, nor figured, and diveſted of all its eſſential properties, I have no conception of it at all; when theſe are taken away, it is then, to all intents and purpoſes, totally annihilated. The caſe is the ſame with reſpect to the mind; when all thought, remembrance, activity, and every other property belonging to it are extinguiſhed, I have then no longer any idea of it: diveſted of all its eſſential properties, it is then deſtroyed, and exiſts no more.

I know it has been ſaid, that actual thinking is not eſſential to the mind, and that it ſometimes ceaſes to think even while we are alive, as in a fainting fit, a ſound ſleep, &c. But all the arguments which have been offered to prove this are vain. They only prove that we do not always remember what we think. I do not remember one thought that paſſed through my mind upon the firſt day of January laſt. Will any one from thence conclude, that I was in a ſtate of inſenſibility all that day? In ſhort, it is one thing to think, and another thing to remember what we thought.

Now if the ſtate of the dead be a ſtate of inſenſibility, in which all thought and activity ceaſe till the reſurrection, then the mind loſes all its eſſential properties; we can form no conception of it; it has no exiſtence, but is wholly annihilated.

It is impoſſible, then, to form any idea of the ſtate of the dead, but as a mere *non-entity*; ſimilar,

ſimilar, in all reſpects, to the condition of thoſe ſouls which never yet exiſted.

But even ſuppoſe the ſouls of men to exiſt in ſuch a ſtate, what valuable end can it ſerve in the creation; for God does nothing in vain. An immenſe multitude of ſouls in a ſtate of inſenſibility can be of no uſe to themſelves; they can be of no uſe to others; they are of leſs uſe in the univerſe, than the meaneſt particles of matter are in the ſyſtem of nature. Is there neither room nor employment for them in ſome different region, that they muſt all be, for a long time, as if they had not been? Or can we ſuppoſe that they are kept in this ſtate of inſenſibility till the laſt day; only that the Supreme Judge may have leſs trouble in raiſing them all at once, and judging them all in a body? In ſhort, as I can form no idea of minds wholly inſenſible and inactive for thouſands of years, ſo I can form no idea or conception of any wiſe end, that ſuch a multitude of beings can ſerve in the creation of God.

Secondly; This ſtate of inſenſibility, makes a very gloomy and uncomfortable impreſſion upon the mind. Death is juſtly called *the king of terrors*; it reduces the wonderful ſtructure of the human body into rottenneſs and corruption; it diſſolves all the ſweet and endearing connections of ſocial life, and robs us of every delightful enjoyment this world can afford. But ſhould it proceed farther, and diveſt us of all conſcious exiſtence, this is yet more terrible than all? This ſtate, indeed, is preferable to abſolute miſery,

miſery, and may afford ſome conſolation to a wicked man; but to a man, conſcious of his own integrity and the divine approbation, it muſt be extremely diſagreeable in a dying hour. To this it will be anſwered, that time not perceived is no time; that where there is really no ſucceſſion of ideas, there is really no time at all; and that to the dead, the moment of their diſſolution, and the moment of their reſurrection, are, in a manner, the ſame, without any interval. I grant, indeed, that where there is no ſucceſſion of ideas, there can be no perception of time; but ſtill I find that this philoſophical nicety can never baniſh from my imagination, the melancholy proſpect of a long and tedious interval between death and the reſurrection.

Let any one ſuppoſe an immediate entrance into a ſtate of eternal happineſs at death, and a ſtate of ten thouſand years inſenſibility between death and the reſurrection; let him compare the two together, and tell me which of theſe he would chuſe, as moſt agreeble and comfortable. I ſhall ſuppoſe two men cruelly perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake, and under ſentence of death for their religion; the one expects an immediate admiſſion into the heavenly world; the other looks forward into a ſtate of joyleſs inactivity, and hopes for heaven only after thouſands of years hence. In this caſe, I think, it is very eaſy to judge which of the two will die with the greateſt conſolation. The firſt of theſe opinions, then, is evidently more favourable to the cauſe of virtue and religion than the other, and, I believe, it will be found, upon due examination, that

that all the martyrs have ſuffered under ſuch a perſuaſion.

But farther, in the third place, a ſtate of inſenſibility is, in my view, directly contrary to many paſſages of ſcripture. The apoſtle Paul evidently ſuppoſes that the human ſoul can exiſt in a ſtate of happineſs immediately after its ſeparation from the body; *I knew a man in Chriſt above fourteen years ago*, ſays he, ſpeaking of himſelf, *(whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth;) ſuch an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew ſuch a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell, God only knoweth:) how that he was caught up into paradiſe, and heard unſpeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.* 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3. It is true, indeed, the apoſtle was not dead and buried at the time when this happened, but if the ſoul becomes inſenſible when ſeparated from the body, he never could have been in paradiſe, and heard ſuch unutterable things; and his uncertainty depended upon the poſſibility of a ſeparate ſtate of conſcious exiſtence.

Our Saviour's argument againſt the ſadducees, is utterly inconſiſtent with a ſtate of inſenſibility. *Now, that the dead are raiſed, even Moſes ſhewed at the buſh, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him.* Luke xx. 27. 28. From theſe words it is evident, that Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob were then living in another world; and that all the paſt generations of men,

men, though dead to us and gone from the world, are nevertheleſs alive in the ſight of God, and in another ſtate; for all live to him, although they may be dead to us. Our Saviour's argument has no force at all againſt the ſadducees, if this be not his meaning. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus, can never be conſiſtent with the doctrine of inſenſibility. It points out an immediate ſtate of happineſs and miſery, Luke xvi. 22. *And it came to paſs that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's boſom; the rich man alſo died, and was buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments.* Now, if any one ſhould affirm, that theſe rewards and puniſhments, relate only to what will follow at the reſurrection, and general judgment, the following words will clearly diſcover the abſurdity of ſuch a ſuppoſition; for while the rich man was tormented in hell, he had five brethren living in his father's houſe; *I pray thee, father Abraham,* ſays he, *that thou wouldeſt ſend to my father's houſe, for I have five brethren, that he may teſtify unto them, leſt they alſo come into this place of torment.* 27, 28. he adds, ver. 30. *If one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.* Now if the ſtate of the dead was a ſtate of abſolute inſenſibility, the rich man could have made no requeſt at all, and the requeſt he made would have been to no purpoſe. For what information could a man, coming from a ſtate of inſenſibility, give to the inhabitants of this world; he could tell them nothing at all. Beſides, Abraham's anſwer ſuppoſes, that Moſes and the prophets could inform the living; that immediately after death,

death, men go into a ſtate of happineſs or miſery. *They have Moſes and the prophets, let them hear them.* Let any man examine our Svaiour's anſwers to the penitent thief on the croſs, and ſee if he can, without the utmoſt violence done to the text, reckon it conſiſtent with the doctrine of inſenſibility. *Lord, remember me,* ſays he, *when thou comeſt into thy kingdom. And Jeſus ſaid unto him, Verily I ſay unto thee, to day ſhalt thou be with me in paradiſe.* Luke xxiii. 42, 43.

Paradiſe is ſurely the ſtate of the bleſſed, the third heaven, to which Paul ſays he was taken up, and heard unutterable things; at twelve o'clock in the day, our Saviour obſerved, that before night they ſhould be in that happy world. It is very trifling to ſay, *That one day is with the Lord as a thouſand years, and a thouſand years as one day*; for we are ſure it is not ſo with us; and Chriſt, no doubt, ſpoke according to the common acceptation of the words among men. For otherwiſe, the penitent thief muſt have been greatly impoſed upon, expecting heaven that day, and yet diappointed for a thouſand years to come. Theſe words muſt, therefore, be taken in ſuch a ſenſe, as is conſiſtent with the character of our Saviour, in whoſe lips there was no guile. Moreover, his dying words upon the croſs may very well explain his meaning, *And when Jeſus had cried with a loud voice, he ſaid, Father, into thy hands I commit my ſpirit; and having ſaid thus, he gave up the ghoſt.* Luke xxiii. 46. Theſe alſo were the dying words of his firſt martyr Stephen, *They ſtoned him, calling upon*

upon God, and ſaying, Lord Jeſus! receive my ſpirit. Acts vii. 59. *At that time he ſaw the heavens opened, and the ſon of man ſtanding on the right hand of God.* Can we now ſuppoſe that he prayed only for admiſſion and preſervation in the ſtate of inſenſibility, or that he deſired *an abundant entrance might be adminiſtered unto him, into the everlaſting kingdom of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* The laſt, in all probability, was what he deſired, and alſo obtained. In the firſt chapter of the epiſtle to the Philippians, verſe 20, the apoſtle told them, *That Chriſt ſhould be magnified in his body, whether it were by life or death. For,* ſays he, *to me to live is Chriſt, and to die is gain. But if I live in the fleſh, this is the fruit of my labour; yet what I ſhall chuſe, I wot not; for I am in a ſtrait between two, having a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better,* than to live in this world. But, if death be a ſtate of inſenſibility, it is ſurely far better to live in this world, than to depart out of it. He muſt ſurely be very wretched, who would chuſe to be deprived of all conſcious exiſtence, rather than to live here. There is no ground to ſuppoſe, that the apoſtle here had any view of an immediate tranſlation to heaven, after the manner of Enoch and Elijah, as ſome imagine, for he expreſsly mentions death and life, as the two things he was in ſuſpenſe about, and clearly inſinuates, that it would be gain to himſelf to die, becauſe he would be immediately with Chriſt. If we compare this paſſage with what he ſays in the 2 Cor. v. 6. *Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilſt we are at home in the body,*

we are abſent from the Lord. We are confident, I ſay, and willing rather to be abſent from the body, and to be preſent with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that whether preſent or abſent we may be accepted of him. Here is as plain a declaration as can be expreſſed in words, that as ſoon as a good man is abſent from the body, or dead, he is immediately preſent with the Lord, and will be accepted of him. In his firſt epiſtle to the Theſſalonians, v. 9, 10. he obſerves, that *God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain ſalvation through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who died for us; that whether we wake or ſleep, we ſhould live together with him.* At the tenth verſe of the preceding chapter, he mentions thoſe that are aſleep, *viz.* the dead, and here he adds, *That whether we wake, i. e.* whether we live in this world, *or ſleep, i. e.* die and enter into another world, *we ſhould live together with him*; but how can theſe live together with Chriſt, who enjoy no manner of life at all, but are utterly inſenſible? In his epiſtle to the Romans, he obſerves, *None of us liveth to himſelf, and no man dieth to himſelf; for whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.* Chapter xiv. 7, 8. Whether living or dead we are the ſervants of the Lord Jeſus. In the ſixth chapter of the Revelation, at the ninth ver. John obſerves, *And when he had opened the fifth ſeal, I ſaw under the altar* (the altar of incenſe, within the veil) *the ſouls of them that were ſlain for the word of God, and for the teſtimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, ſaying, How long,*

long, O Lord, holy and true, doſt thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth. And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was ſaid unto them, that they ſhould reſt yet for a little ſeaſon, until their fellow-ſervants alſo, and their brethren, that ſhould be killed as they were, ſhould be fulfilled. Theſe martyrs are repreſented in the viſion, under the altar of incenſe, to ſignify God's gracious acceptance of their conſtancy and perſeverance in the faith, according to theſe words of the Pſalmiſt, *Precious in the ſight of the Lord, is the death of his ſaints*; they are in a ſtate of reſt; for as the apoſtle obſerves, *There remaineth a reſt for the people of God*; that is, a ſtate of happineſs after death. White robes were given to every one of them. Theſe were emblems of purity, marks of honour and diſtinction conferred upon them; all which ſeem evidently to point out an immediate ſtate of happineſs to good men. After this again, at the opening of the ſixth ſeal, he adds, *I beheld and a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, ſtood before the throne, and before the lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, and they cried with a loud voice, ſaying, Salvation to our God which ſitteth upon the throne, and to the lamb.* Immediately all the heavenly inhabitants ſaid Amen, and joined in the ſong. *And one of the elders ſaid unto me, Theſe are they which came out of great tribulation, and have waſhed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God, and ſerve him day and night in his temple; and he that ſitteth on the*

throne ſhall dwell among them; they ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more, neither ſhall the ſun light on them, nor any heat; for the lamb ſhall feed them, and ſhall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Rev. vii. 9, &c. Now there are three things which make me believe that this is a repreſentation of the ſtate of good men immediately after death. Firſt, The deſign of the whole prophecy, which is to encourage and ſupport true chriſtians under all the hardſhips and perſecutions of the preſent ſtate, and ſurely nothing can anſwer that end better than a proſpect of entering into immediate happineſs. Secondly, According to the order of the prophecy, this viſion is repreſented immediately after a ſtate of long and ſevere perſecution, which the church ſuffered from the heathens, till the reign of Conſtantine the Great; and therefore it muſt be a deſcription of the happy ſtate, into which theſe faithful martyrs were admitted. Thirdly, The happy ſtate here deſcribed, can never be applied to any period of the chriſtian church, even in its greateſt proſperity.

To the ſame purpoſe John obſerves, chapter xiv. 13. *And I heard a voice from heaven, ſaying unto me, Write, bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea ſaith the ſpirit, that they may reſt from their labours, and their works do follow them.* Here it is evident that the dead, which die in the Lord, are bleſſed or happy; immediately after they die. Henceforth they reſt from their labours or ſufferings, and their good works do follow them to the other world, and make them meet for the

inheritance

inheritance of the ſaints in light. This gives the greateſt encouragement to patience or perſeverance, which is the principal intention of all theſe prophecies. From all theſe paſſages I have mentioned, it ſeems very clear, that the ſtate of the virtuous dead, is not a ſtate of inſenſibility, but a ſtate of the higheſt felicity and glory. I ſhall obſerve only one thing further upon this ſubject. The apoſtle Paul aſſures us, *That to this end Chriſt both died and roſe, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.* Rom. xiv. 9. Now, we know very well, that his lordſhip and dominion over the living conſiſts in his governing them by his laws, and the diſpenſations of his providence. But, if the dead are in a ſtate of inſenſibility, I can conceive no authority, no government he can poſſibly exerciſe over them, nor, in ſuch a ſtate, are they capable of any. His kingdom is not of this world, properly ſpeaking: it is in heaven, in the world to come.

Now, if he has no ſubjects of the heavenly race in that ſtate, capable of moral government and rational obedience, then the whole of his authority over men muſt be limited to this world only. But if, on the other hand, the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, do immediately enter into his inviſible kingdom; if they are ſubject to his ſupreme authority, and made happy under his wiſe and gracious adminiſtration; if this be the caſe, then we can form a very honourable conception of his kingdom after death, and of the happy ſtate of thoſe who ſhall be admitted into it. But, perhaps it will be ſaid, that he is Lord of the dead only in this ſenſe, that he will raiſe

them all to life again at the end of the world. But granting that to be true, it will evidently follow then, that between death and the reſurrection, they have no ſhare in his mediatorial kingdom, no, nor even then alſo, any further than to be judged by him; for after the laſt judgment *he ſhall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; and when all things ſhall be ſubdued unto him, then ſhall the ſon alſo himſelf be ſubject unto him that put all things under him, that God,* even the Father, *may be all in all.* 1 Cor. xv. 24—28.

From the whole, then it appears to me, firſt, That the common opinion of an intermediate ſtate of imperfect happineſs, between death and the reſurrection, has no ſufficient foundation in ſcripture. Secondly, That the opinion of an intermediate ſtate of abſolute inſenſibility, is evidently repugnant to many clear and inconteſtible paſſages in it. What, then, ſhall we conclude from both theſe, that really there is no intermediate ſtate of any kind, but that the reſurrection, the coming of Chriſt, and the judgment will immediately follow the inſtant of our death. This, I am inclined to believe, is the true ſcripture doctrine of a future ſtate.—My reaſons for this opinion are as follows:

Firſt, When I conſider the true notion of a reſurrection, I find it will neither agree to the opinion of thoſe who apply it to the raiſing of the ſame individual body, nor of thoſe who apply it to the raiſing of the ſoul from a ſtate of inſenſibility. 1. The reſurrection does not conſiſt in raiſing from the grave the ſame individual bodies. I have, in a manner, ſhewn this

this before, but ſhall here ſet it in a ſtronger light. For this purpoſe, let us conſider the force of our Saviour's argument againſt the ſadducees. This ſect of men denied that there is any future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments after death. The diſpute between them and our Saviour, was not whether theſe ſame bodies we live in, will riſe again in a future ſtate. No; but whether we ſhall enter into another world after death, be happy or miſerable there, according to our preſent conduct. This they denied. This our Saviour proved by a very ſhort and concluſive argument, Luke xx. 37. *Now that the dead are raiſed*, ſays he, *even Moſes ſhewed at the buſh, when he called the Lord, the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob; for he is not a God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto him.* Now, it is evident from theſe words, that our Saviour undertakes to prove a fact already paſt, not an event yet to come, namely, that the dead are actually raiſed, and particularly he mentions Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, who had riſen from the dead long before that time. The proof he brings is in theſe words, *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob.* Theſe words were ſpoken to Moſes out of the burning buſh. Theſe patriarchs had gone the way of all fleſh ſome hundreds of years before that time, and yet theſe men were alive in another world. From whence it is evident, that as ſoon as we enter into another world, we riſe from the dead. The argument here has no relation to the bodies of theſe men. They are not ſo much as men-

tioned in the diſpute. It is further obſervable, that our Saviour expreſsly ſays, *That all live to God*; that is, all who die live to him; and if all who die live to him in another world, then, conſequently, all who die are raiſed from the dead as well as Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob; for the argument, by which our Saviour proves the reſurrection of theſe three patriarchs, at the ſame time proves, that all who die, are, in like manner, raiſed from the dead. Accordingly the evangeliſt Mark, uſes an expreſſion very general and applicable to all men, as touching the dead, that they riſe or enter immediately into another world, Mark xii. 26. From all this it is evident, that the reſurrection ſignifies only an immediate entrance into another world, and that all who die enter immediately into that world, and are immediately raiſed from the dead. Accordingly our Saviour ſpeaks of the reſurrection of the dead, as a work continually going on, like the regular courſe of nature in this world. *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work; the ſon can do nothing of himſelf, but what he ſeeth the Father do; for what things ſoever he doeth, theſe alſo doeth the ſon likewiſe.* John v. 17, 19. Then he mentions one particular work, which the Father is employed in, and in which he himſelf was alſo to be employed; *for as the Father raiſeth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even ſo the ſon quickeneth whom he will.* ver. 21.

Thus it appears, that the reſurrection of the dead, or an entrance into a ſtate of future rewards and puniſhments, is not a work reſerved to be done all at once at the end of the world, but a work

work continually carrying on. That a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, after death, is the juſt and proper notion of the reſurrection, will alſo appear from the fifteenth chapter of the firſt of Corinthians. In that church there were ſome who denied that doctrine, *Now*, ſays he, *if Chriſt be preached, that he roſe from the dead, how ſay ſome among you that there is no reſurrection of the dead.* The reſurrection of Chriſt was what they all believed, and from thence he proves a future ſtate. His arguments have no relation at all to the reſurrection of the ſame body. *If Chriſt be not raiſed, then they alſo which are fallen aſleep in Chriſt are periſhed*, 18. How are they periſhed? Muſt we all periſh, if our bodies, which we have at preſent, do not riſe from the grave. Is it impoſſible for the ſpirit to exiſt without the body? No, ſurely. Then death muſt be the deſtruction of both, which was the opinion of the ſadducees. But, if the ſoul can exiſt without, or after the diſſolution of the body, then the apoſtles argument has no force at all, if applied to the reſurrection of the ſame body. His adverſaries might have replied, "Your "concluſion is falſe; for though this body "ſhould never riſe again, yet our ſouls might "be happy or miſerable in a future ſtate, "without any body, or in a different one from "the preſent." But if, by the reſurrection, he means a future ſtate, then his argument is unanſwerable; and it is this; If there be no future ſtate, then they alſo which are fallen aſleep in Chriſt are periſhed. And as the apoſtles and primitive chriſtians were expoſed to all manner of

of perſecutions in this world, he adds, in the following verſe, what explains the former, and confirms what he had ſaid, that the reſurrection means only another world; *If in this life only we have hope in Chriſt, we are of all men moſt miſerable*; if there is not another world after death, we are fools to ſuffer ſo much in this. And at the thirty-ſecond verſe, he obſerves *If after the manner of men I have fought with beaſts at Epheſus, what advantageth it me, if the dead riſe not? Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.* That is, if there be no ſtate of rewards and puniſhments after death, then we may live as we pleaſe. From all this it is evident, that by the reſurrection, we are to underſtand only a future ſtate. His arguments prove this, but do, by no means, prove the reſurrection of the ſame individual body. At the twenty-ſecond ver. he obſerves, *That as in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* In this compariſon two things are implied, 1. Like Adam, and in conſquence of his one offence, all men ſuffer death, ſo like Chriſt, in conſequence of his perfect obedience, ſhall all be raiſed from the dead. 2dly. As all die, not at one and the ſame time, but according to the ſucceſſion of generations, ſo all ſhall be made alive, not at one and the ſame time, but according to a certain order and ſucceſſion alſo; this the apoſtle expreſsly affirms in the following verſe; *All ſhall be made alive; but every man in his own order, i. e.* every man ſhall riſe again or enter into a future ſtate immediately after his death in this world. If we apply theſe words to the reſurrection of the ſame body, we then miſtake

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the apoſtle's meaning; if we apply them to a future ſtate, we may eaſily conceive the order of the reſurrection. The order in which men die, explains the order in which they are made alive; one dies to-day, and immediately riſes into another world. A ſecond dies to-morrow, and immediately follows him, and ſo on, every one in his own order, till the laſt generation, who ſhall not die but be changed; and as for the bodies of men after death, he gives us alſo a very clear account of theſe in his anſwer to this queſtion, *But ſome men will ſay, How are the dead raiſed up, and with what bodies do they come*; *i. e.* if men ſhall enter into a future ſtate immediately after death, what ſort of bodies will they have? This he looks upon as a very fooliſh queſtion, and yet condeſcends to give it an anſwer, namely, that the bodies of men after death will be quite different from the preſent; they will be incorruptible, glorious, powerful and ſpiritual, having neither fleſh nor blood as they have at preſent. With theſe bodies we ſhall be clothed, as ſoon as we enter into another world. For in his ſecond epiſtle, v. 8. he obſerves, *That as ſoon as we are abſent from the body, we are preſent with the Lord. That when our earthly houſe of this tabernacle is diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. In this body we groan earneſtly, deſiring to be clothed upon with our houſe which is from heaven.* Our earthly houſe is one body, our houſe from heaven is another; when the one is diſſolved, we are immediately clothed with the other, and in the preſence

ſence of Chriſt. From all which it is evident, that the reſurrection, properly ſpeaking, does not mean the reſurrection of the ſame individual body, but an entrance into another world.

Secondly, Neither does it mean the reviving of the thinking powers of human nature, after a long ſtate of inſenſibility; this appears ſufficiently clear from what has been ſaid before, and will be indiſputable from the requeſt of the rich man in hell, Luke xvi. 30, 31. He had prayed before, that Lazarus might be ſent back to this world to inform his five brethren of the torments he ſuffered. *If one went to them from the dead, they will repent*, ſays he; from whence it is evident, that to come from the dead, or to riſe from the dead, ſignifies no more than to come back from another world to this; for as it has already been obſerved, if the reſurrection from the dead be only an awakening from a ſtate of inſenſibility, ſuch a reſurrection could give us no account of any thing, and, therefore, the true doctrine of the reſurrection, conſiſts in entering into another world after death, or in coming back from that world to the preſent. The reſurrection, therefore, immediately ſucceeds death, and, conſequently, all the promiſes and threatenings of the goſpel ſhall then be accompliſhed to every man. Further, it is granted by all men, that the reſurrection, the coming of Chriſt and the judgment, will happen at one and the ſame time. But if the reſurrection happens immediately after death, then the coming of Chriſt and the judgment will be immediately after death alſo. Accordingly, this is

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the very account of the matter, given in ſcripture. In Matthew xxiv. our Saviour foretold the deſtruction of the Jewiſh nation, at the twenty-ninth ver. he adds, *After the tribulation of thoſe days, the ſun ſhall be darkened, and the moon ſhall not give her light, and the ſtars ſhall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens ſhall be ſhaken. And then ſhall appear the ſign of the ſon of man in heaven; and then ſhall all the tribes of the earth,* (the Jewiſh tribes, ſhall mourn over all the earth for this calamity) *and they ſhall ſee the ſon of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And he ſhall ſend his angels* (his apoſtles) *with a great ſound of a trumpet,* (with the preached goſpel) *and they ſhall gather together his elect* (all who believe in Chriſt) *from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other,* (from among all nations.) *Now learn a parable of the fig-tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that ſummer is nigh; ſo likewiſe, ye* (my diſciples) *when ye ſhall ſee all theſe things, viz.* "falſe chriſts and falſe prophets, when ye ſhall "be perſecuted by the Jews, when the goſpel "ſhall be preached through all the Roman "empire, when ye ſhall ſee Jeruſalem compaſſed "about with armies, and many other awful "ſigns," *know that it is near, even at the doors, viz.* (my coming to judgment.) *Verily I ſay unto you, This generation ſhall not paſs till all theſe things be fulfilled.* Thus we ſee, that the coming of Chriſt, and the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, happened at one and the ſame time. I know, indeed, that it is generally thought our Saviour here deſcribes his coming, at the end of this world,

world, to judge the whole human race; and to ſupport this interpretation, it is ſaid, that the ſun and moon were to be darkened, the ſtars were to fall at that time, and the ſon of man was to appear in heaven, none of which happened at the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and, therefore, it relates to the end of the world. To this I anſwer, that our Saviour uſes the very ſame expreſſions, uſed by the ancient prophets, to deſcribe the deſtruction of a nation by fearful judgments and public calamities, and therefore our Saviour's words ſhould be explained by them; ſome of theſe I ſhall mention. The prophet Joel, when he foretold a famine to be occaſioned by a great number of locuſts, which were to devour the whole fruits of the earth, deſcribes the calamity in theſe words, *The earth ſhall quake before them, the heavens ſhall tremble; the ſun and moon ſhall be darkened, and the ſtars ſhall withdraw their ſhining.* Joel ii. 10. The prophet Iſaiah deſcribes the deſtruction of Babylon in the ſame manner, *Behold the day of the Lord cometh, both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land deſolate, and he ſhall deſtrong the ſinners thereof out of it, for the ſtars of heaven and the conſtellations thereof ſhall not give their light; the ſun ſhall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon ſhall not cauſe her light to ſhine.* Iſaiah xiii. 9, 10. The deſtruction of Edom is foretold in expreſſions of the ſame kind, *And all the hoſt of heaven ſhall be diſſolved, and the heavens ſhall be rolled together as a ſcroll; and all their hoſt ſhall fall down as the leaf falleth from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree* Then the meaning of the prophecy

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is expreſſed in plain language, *For my ſword ſhall be bathed in heaven; behold, it ſhall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curſe to judgment, &c.* Iſ. xxxiv. 4, 5. Others of the like kind might be produced, but theſe are ſufficient to explain the words of our Saviour, when he foretels the deſtruction of Jeruſalem by the Romans. Accordingly his words fix the whole of the prophecy to that very generation, *Verily I ſay unto you, This generation ſhall not paſs till all theſe things be fulfilled,* (and alſo that part of the prophecy) *then ſhall ye ſee the ſon of man coming in the clouds of heaven.* This will admit of a very natural interpretation, and the ſubject I am inſiſting upon clearly points it out; for as ſoon as the Jews periſhed, by that calamity, and were cut off from the land of the living, they immediately entered the inviſible world, where Chriſt ſits on the right hand of God, and appeared before the judgment-ſeat of him whom they had condemned and crucified.

The words of our Saviour are very remarkable, for he ſpeaks of the Jews only who periſhed upon that occaſion. He does not ſay to his diſciples, Ye ſhall ſee the ſon of man coming in the clouds of heaven at that time, but they, (viz. the Jews,) who ſhall be cut off by that deſtruction. For if Stephen ſaw him immediately before his death, ſitting on the right hand of God, though he was inviſible to his perſecutors. If he appeared in glory to Saul on his way to Damaſcus, without appearing to his companions, we cannot think it unreaſonable that he will appear upon the throne of his glory

glory to all who enter into the other world, eſpecially conſidering that he is ordained, by God, to be the judge of the quick and dead, Acts x. 42. The meaning of our Saviour's words in that prophecy is evident alſo from the uſe he intended his own diſciples ſhould make of it, ver. 44, &c. *Therefore, be ye alſo ready, for in ſuch an hour as ye think not, the ſon of man cometh. Who then is a wiſe and faithful ſervant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his houſhold, to give them meat in due ſeaſon; bleſſed is that ſervant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find ſo doing. Take heed to yourſelves, leſt at any time your hearts be overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs, and the cares of this life, and ſo that day come upon you unawares; for as a ſnare ſhall it come upon all them that dwell upon the face of the earth; watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to eſcape all theſe things that ſhall come to paſs, and to ſtand before the ſon of man.* Luke xxi. 34. &c. *What I ſay unto one, I ſay unto all, Watch! Watch ye, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour when the ſon of man cometh.* In all theſe words our Saviour never once deſires his diſciples to prepare for death, but always for his coming to judgment, which plainly ſuppoſes that between death and judgment there is no intermediate time, but the one immediately follows the other. In 2 Cor. v. 8, 9. the apoſtle ſets this matter in the very ſame light, *We are confident, I ſay, and willing rather to be abſent from the body, and to be preſent with the Lord*; evidently ſignifying, as I formerly obſerved, that as ſoon as we are abſent from

from the body, or dead, we are preſent with the Lord. The uſe he made of this important truth he mentions in the next verſe, *Wherefore we labour, that whether preſent or abſent*, living or dead, *we may be accepted of him.* Then he adds, in following verſe, *For we muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

Now the queſtion is this, When we muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt? The preceding verſes point out an anſwer; as ſoon as we are abſent from the body (as ſoon as we die) we muſt then appear before him, and receive the final ſentence. Accordingly, at death, he expected to receive his reward, *I am now ready to be offered up*, ſays he, *and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day.* What day does he mean? The foregoing words point it out to be the day of his departure out of this life, the day when he ſhould be offered up, in that very day, the Lord, the righteous judge, ſhall give me a crown of righteouſneſs, and not to me only, but to all them alſo that love his appearing? 2 Tim. iv. 6. The words of the apoſtle James exactly agree with this, *Bleſſed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he ſhall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promiſed to them that love him*, James i. 12. Here we ſee that when a man is tried, tried to the

laſt, and found faithful, then ſhall he receive the crown of eternal life; and is it not evident, that when our trial is finiſhed at death, we ſhall receive the full reward of all our labours. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Rev. ii. 10. Upon this important ſubject the harmony of the apoſtolic writings appears in the ſtrongeſt light. The apoſtle Paul addreſſes the Corinthians in theſe words: *Ye come behind in no gift,* ſays he, *waiting for the coming of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall alſo confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameleſs in the day of the Lord.* The end of their life was the day of Chriſt. 1 Cor. i. 7, 8. *Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath began a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jeſus Chriſt, i. e.* until death. Phil. i. 6. *I pray God,* ſays he, *your whole ſpirit, and ſoul and body be preſented blameleſs unto the coming of our Lord.* 1 Theſſ. v. 23. that is, until death. This would be a prayer for the dead, if there was any intermediate ſtate between death and the coming of Chriſt, *I give thee charge in the ſight of God, that thou keep this commandment without ſpot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord.* 1 Tim. vi. 13. *Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord, i. e.* until death. James iv. 7. *That which ye have, hold faſt till I come.* Rev. ii. 25. From all which it is evident, that the day of our death and the coming of Chriſt are one and the ſame, without any intervening time. Hence, we have a plain reaſon, why in all the New Teſtament we are never exhorted to prepare for death, but always for the coming of

of Chriſt to judgment, becauſe the one immediately ſucceeds the other. This alſo gives us a natural and eaſy explanation of our Saviour's words, *Repent, or elſe I will come unto thee quickly.* Rev. ii. 16. *Behold I come quickly; hold that faſt which thou haſt, that no man take thy crown.* Rev. iii. 11. *Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give unto every one according as his work ſhall be.* Rev. xxii. 12. *He that teſtifies theſe things ſaith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even ſo come, Lord Jeſus.* Rev. xxii. 20. Death often comes in a day we think not of, and in an hour when we are not aware. It comes like a thief in the night, when men are neither expecting it, nor well prepared for it. The coming of Chriſt is one and the ſame.

Hence, alſo, we ſee the plain meaning of theſe admonitions: *Let your moderation be known unto all men; the Lord is at hand. Yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Behold! the judge ſtands before the door. The end of all things is at hand.* It is now above ſeventeen hundred years ſince theſe warnings were given, and yet, according to the common opinion, Chriſt's coming is ſtill at a great diſtance. The coming of the Lord is nigh, and yet is far off. How ſhall we reconcile this apparent contradiction. This is eaſily done. The coming of our Lord draweth near to every individual of the preſent generation, for he will come at their death; but it is far off with reſpect to the laſt generation of men that ſhall be upon the face of the earth: but then it is to be obſerved, that he will not

come unto them as he does unto us, by death and judgment, in the inviſible world. No; the laſt generation of men will not die. *Behold, I ſhew you a myſtery; We ſhall not all die, but we ſhall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the laſt trump; for the trumpet ſhall ſound, and the dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible, and we* (Chriſtians who ſhall be alive at that time) *ſhall be changed.* 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. But here it may be objected, Does not the apoſtle fix the reſurrection to that particular time only, when he ſays the laſt trumpet ſhall ſound, and the dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible, implying, that none of the dead ſhall riſe till then. In anſwer to this, let it be remembered, what was already ſaid upon the true notion of the reſurrection, wherein I obſerved, that it either ſignifies an entrance into the other world, or a returning from that world to this. Thus the coming of Lazarus from heaven back to this world, to inform the rich man's brethren of a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, is called in that parable, ariſing from the dead. In like manner, when Chriſt ſhall appear with all his ſaints and angels, this will be an awful diſplay of the inviſible world; for all that ever paſſed through the gates of death, will then appear to that generation truly alive, and give the moſt convincing proof of the reſurrection of the dead. At this laſt coming of Chriſt, the heavens and the earth ſhall periſh. *The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat; the earth alſo,*

and

and the works that are therein, ſhall be burnt up. The heavens and the earth, which now by the word of God are kept in ſtore, reſerved unto fire againſt the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men. 2 Peter iii. 7, 10, 11. In the following verſe, he ſuppoſes that it may be long till that coming of Chriſt. *Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thouſand years, and a thouſand years as one day.* But leſt the proſpect of ſuch a far diſtant period ſhould diſcourage us, he adds, v. 13. *Nevertheleſs, we, according to his promiſe, look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs.* This promiſe is recorded, Iſaiah lxv. 17. The words of our Saviour will lead us to the meaning of this. *In my father's houſe are many manſions; if it were not ſo, I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myſelf, that where I am, there ye may be alſo,* John xiv. 2, 3. And chap. xvii. 24. he prayed, *Father, I will, that they alſo whom thou haſt given me may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou haſt given me.* Now the place to which our Saviour went, and where he abides, is heaven. This is the place he went to prepare for them, conſequently the new heavens and the new earth, mentioned by the apoſtle, is that very ſtate where Chriſt now reigns over ſaints and angels; and for our comfort he obſerves, that though it be a long time till the laſt coming of Chriſt and the deſtruction of this world, nevertheleſs, we, according to his promiſe, look for a new heaven

and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs. We expect immediately at death to enter into that happy world. Upon this hope his exhortation is founded at the fourteenth verſe, *Wherefore, beloved, ſeeing that ye look for ſuch things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace.*

Now the ſum of what I have ſaid may be reduced to theſe propoſitions.

1ſt, That there is no intermediate ſtate of any happineſs between death and the reſurrection.

2dly, That there is no intermediate ſtate of inſenſibility between death and the reſurrection. But,

3dly, That immediately after death, men ſhall enter into another world, or riſe from the dead, for theſe are the ſame in ſcripture.

4thly, That immediately after death we ſhall be clothed in bodies celeſtial and incorruptible.

5thly, That immediately after death we ſhall appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, and receive a ſentence according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or evil.

Laſtly, That theſe important tranſactions, with regard to the dead, are continually going on in the inviſible world, and will do ſo till the end, when Chriſt ſhall be revealed from heaven, to the view of all on the earth, at that day when he will alſo judge, reward, and puniſh them according to their works,

Only one objection againſt the notion I have endeavoured to ſupport, occurs to me. I ſhall ſtate it fairly, and give the anſwer.

This

This objection concerns the reſurrection of the body. Are we not told that all thoſe perſons, whom our Saviour and his apoſtles raiſed from the dead, were raiſed with the ſame bodies they had before? That our Saviour roſe with the ſame body in which he ſuffered? That Enoch and Elijah aſcended into heaven with the ſame bodies they had upon earth? That when our Saviour was crucified, *The graves were opened; and many bodies which ſlept aroſe, and came out of the graves after his reſurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.* Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. And in one of John's viſions, *The ſea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them.* Rev. xx. 13. All which give us reaſon to believe, that the very individual bodies we have in this world, ſhall be raiſed at the laſt day.

As this objection ſeems to be founded upon ſeveral paſſages of ſcripture, I ſhall conſider them ſeparately, and in order.

Firſt, With reſpect to the bodies of Enoch and Elijah, it is true they did not leave their bodies behind them. But, as fleſh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, ſo we have reaſon to believe, that their bodies were changed, as the laſt generation of men ſhall be, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; and by this change, rendered ſpiritual and incorruptible, fit for the heavenly world. That change might eaſily be made by the ſame power that turned water into wine; and as for the bodies of them that were raiſed from the dead, by our Saviour and his apoſtles, it muſt be obſerved, that theſe had

not been reduced to their original duſt, neither were they raiſed ſpiritual and incorruptible, as the bodies of men ſhall be in the other world, for they were again brought unto the duſt of death. The deſign of their reſurrection was to prove the divine commiſſion of our Saviour and his apoſtles. And, as for the body of Chriſt, it ſaw no corruption in the grave, but was preſerved by a miracle, that his diſciples might have the moſt ſenſible proof of his reſurrection, upon which the truth of his religion depends. Nevertheleſs, we are certain, that his body was not the ſame in all reſpects, that it was before his death; he could appear and diſappear in a moment; he could enter the room the door being ſhut, and after his aſcenſion into heaven; he appeared to Stephen, to Paul, to John, in a more glorious manner than ever he did before his departure out of this world, unleſs when he was transfigured upon the mount. As for the bodies of the ſaints which came out of their graves, after his reſurrection, theſe appear to have been ſome who were lately dead, and were well acquainted with thoſe to whom they appeared; perſons who perhaps had died only a few days before, and whoſe bodies were not reduced to their original duſt; whoſe reſurrection and appearance might poſſibly have been intended to add the greater ſtrength and luſtre to the evidence of Chriſt's reſurrection. But, be that as it will, the caſe of all theſe is quite different from that of the human race in general, whoſe bodies are all reduced unto the earth. Their ſtructure and organization were entirely demoliſhed,

demoliſhed, and they in the ſame condition they were in before they were created; for when bodies are once corrupted, reduced to their firſt principles, and changed into perhaps ten thouſand different animals and vegetables, many of theſe the bodies of other men; when that is the caſe with a human body, the collecting, uniting, and forming of theſe particles into a human body again, is as really and properly a creation, as the creation of Adam's body, immediately from the duſt; and, therefore, the reſurrection, taken in the ſtrict and literal ſenſe of the word, can be applied to no human body that has been entirely demoliſhed, but only to theſe who were dead, and their organization ſtill preſerved; when theſe are animated with life, and ſtand up again, then only we have a reſurrection of the ſame individual body.

But it is ſtrange to me, that ſome men ſhould have ſuch a ſtrong affection to a certain quantity of matter, that none but that will pleaſe them at the reſurrection. One dies a mere ſkeleton, conſiſting only of ſkin and bones, another corpulent and over-grown to the laſt degree; will nothing pleaſe them at the reſurrection but the ſame individual bodies? One loſes an arm or a leg in his infancy, and afterwards dies in his full ſtrength and vigour. Muſt we have, at the reſurrection, the well proportioned body of a man, and the leg of an infant. The argument of the ſadducees againſt a future ſtate would have been unanſwerable againſt the reſurrection of the ſame body, had it been put in the following words: "One

" One man dies, and the materials of his body, " ſome ages afterwards, are formed into the body " of another man; he in like manner dies, and his " body, ſome time after, conſtitutes the body " of a third, and ſo on to the reſurrection." Now, at the reſurrection, whoſe body ſhall this one be, for three different perſons had it at different times.

Theſe, among other abſurdities, attend the reſurrection of the ſame body. But further, if we conſider what ſeems to be the intention of our preſent bodies, we ſhall find no reaſon for their reſurrection. It ſeems to be the deſign of Providence, that we ſhould live for a certain time on this earth, and undergo a ſtate of probation here. For this end we were united to bodies, groſs as the earth on which we dwell, ſubject to the univerſal law of gravitation, which binds us down to this terraqueous globe, and from which we can never depart until this tabernacle be diſſolved; after that our ſpirits are no longer ſubject to the power of gravitation, but enjoy full liberty to move in any direction, or through any region in the univerſe. For we cannot conceive how a ſpirit can be confined to one particular place, unleſs when united to a certain ſyſtem of matter; for this reaſon, therefore, it is probable, that after death our ſouls ſhall be united to certain bodies refined and ætherial, like the region where God intends their habitation ſhould be; when once united to ſuch bodies, they muſt, of conſequence, abide in that region where ſupreme happineſs is aſſigned them; accordingly the apoſtle plainly affirms, that there are bodies celeſtial

celeſtial and bodies terreſtrial; that when our earthly houſe of this tabernacle is diſſolved, we ſhall be clothed upon with our houſe, or body, which is from heaven, and not with our houſe which is from earth, and raiſed from the grave. And as for that paſſage in Revelations, where John ſaw the ſea give up the dead which were in it, and death and hell gave up the dead which were in them, I ſee no cauſe why that ſhould be looked upon as a deſcription of the general reſurrection, of all human bodies, at the laſt day; for if the giving up the dead means a reſurrection, then we muſt conclude, that there will be a reſurrection of all human ſouls as well as of their bodies. For in theſe words, hell, or the ſtate into which the ſouls of men enter after death, alſo gave up the dead which were in it. Now, if the dead, which were in hell or in the inviſible world, had before that time received no rewards nor puniſhments, then death muſt be a ſtate of inſenſibility, contrary to many paſſages of ſcripture already mentioned. If hell, or the ſtate of the dead, be a ſtate of future rewards or puniſhments, then hell giving up the dead which were in it, can ſignify no more than returning from, or appearing after death. Juſt as was already obſerved concerning Lazarus, whoſe returning back to this world from a ſtate of happineſs, is called a riſing from the dead, and therefore, John means only by theſe words, that all who ever died and entered into the inviſible world, all who ever were buried in the earth, or drowned in the ſea, that is, the whole human race, ſtood before

before God and were judged after death. This leads me to the two objections concerning the laſt judgment, viz. that all muſt appear at the end of the world before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, according to theſe words of John, *And I ſaw the dead, ſmall and great, ſtand before God; and the books were opened, and the dead were judged out of thoſe books, according to their works.* Rev. xx. 12.

This objection is connected with the preceding, and the ſame anſwer ſerves both, namely, that all were judged who entered into the inviſible world; that this future ſtate was repreſented to him in a viſion, as a powerful motive for men to act a faithful and righteous part in this world, ſeeing they ſhall be rewarded and puniſhed according to their preſent conduct, The opening of books, and judging men out of theſe, is only an alluſion to the conduct of earthly judges, who, to prevent injuſtice, muſt proceed according to the written laws of the ſtate; ſignifying no more than this, that God will reward and puniſh men in another world with as much exactneſs, as if every individual action of their whole lives was recorded in a book, and to be tried by the eternal laws of equity. But let it be remembered, that the doctrine of a general judgment at the end of the world, is as liable to as ſtrong an objection, as the doctrine of a particular and final judgment immediately after death.

Thoſe men who hold that death is a ſtate of inſenſibility, can give a very good reaſon why all ſhould be raiſed and judged at the laſt day, becauſe

becauſe then only the ſtate of rewards and puniſhments will begin. I can alſo give a reaſon why men ſhould be immediately judged and raiſed after death, becauſe their happineſs or miſery will then begin. But no man can give a reaſon why all the dead ſhould be rewarded and puniſhed for thouſands of years, and then be judged whether they deſerved it or not.

Let us now compare what hath been ſaid with the common opinion of a future ſtate.

Firſt, they ſay, that immediately after death, the ſouls of men enter into a ſtate of happineſs or miſery, and have I not undertaken to prove the ſame. Secondly, they ſay, that immediately after death, every individual ſhall be judged, and a righteous ſentence paſſed upon him; this I have proved alſo. So far we agree. Here only is the difference:—

Firſt, They ſay, that every man ſhall receive his own body raiſed from the grave at the end of the world, and rendered fit for a ſtate of immortality; but I ſay, that immediately after death we ſhall receive a body from heaven, as glorious and immortal as they can poſſibly deſire. We agree as to the perfection of thoſe bodies; we differ only with reſpect to their origin, and the time when we ſhall receive them. They believe that they ſhall come from the earth; I ſay that they ſhall come from heaven, and ſo ſaith the apoſtle. They expect to be united with their bodies only at the end of the world; I affirm they ſhall receive them much ſooner—immediately after death.

Secondly,

Secondly, They expect to be judged twice, once at death, and again at the end of the world. I affirm, that we ſhall be judged once only, immediately after death, and that this will be ſufficient to determine our lot for ever.

Thirdly, They have no expectation of perfect happineſs till this world be deſtroyed; I ſay they ſhall be perfectly happy immediately after death. Now let any man judge impartially, and ſee if my opinion can have any bad influence upon men's actions. It is impoſſible it can have any, for inſtead of weakening the hopes and fears of another world, it rather ſtrengthens and confirms them. It brings ſome of the objects of our faith much nearer than is generally imagined, and, conſequently, gives them the greater force.

Let us now try how far it agrees with, or differs from the doctrine of inſenſibility.

Firſt, They believe there is no intermediate ſtate of happineſs between death and the reſurrection; and have not I affirmed the ſame?

Secondly, They believe that the doctrine of a future ſtate, and the reſurrection are one and the ſame in ſcripture; to which I alſo agree.

Thirdly, They believe that men ſhall be judged only once, and then enter into a ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, which is the ſame with my opinion.

Fourthly, They believe, that at the reſurrection, the ſame individual body will not riſe from the grave, but that good men ſhall receive bodies celeſtial and glorious, immediately formed by a divine hand; to which I alſo agree.

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The only difference, then, lies here, that they have the gloomy proſpect of being inſenſible for thouſands of years, perhaps, before their happineſs begins; whereas I endeavour to prove that their happineſs ſhall immediately begin after death.

What can be more conducive to the intereſt of virtue than to believe this doctrine, that within a year, a month, a day, perhaps within a moment, we ſhall enter into another world, appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, and receive a full reward according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or evil.

PHILANDER.

P. S. Since writing the above, the author is informed, that a notion the ſame, or ſimilar to this, hath been advanced by a learned and worthy miniſter in London,* but he never had the pleaſure of ſeeing his treatiſe on that ſubject.

* Dr. Caleb Fleming.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

Depending upon your uſual indulgence, I continue my remarks on what I cannot, at preſent, help thinking to be exceptionable paſſages in the writings of St. Paul.

HAVING made ſome obſervations on the uſe that St. Paul has made of the hiſtory of Melchizedec, I ſhall preſent your readers with what has occurred to me with reſpect to his reaſoning about the *promiſe that God made to Abraham*, from which the Jews derived all the privileges and prerogatives of their nation.

The firſt converts to chriſtianity were greatly embarraſſed by the Jews, who were perpetually boaſting of their deſcent from *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*. On this circumſtance they founded their title to all the promiſes that God had made to theſe anſwers of theirs, and their pretenſions to be the *peculiar people of God*. To theſe privileges they maintained that it would be the moſt vain and abſurd thing in the world for any Gentile, whether a chriſtian or not, to aſpire; and leaſt of all, could they imagine the Gentiles would ever pretend to exclude them from a natural and divine right, which they had been in the indiſputed and ſole poſſeſſion of, for near two thouſand years.

This honorary diſtinction of having *God for their father*, and being *the peculiar people of God*, the

the Jews, before, and at the coming of Chriſt, were above meaſure fond of, and afterwards ſtrenuouſly maintained, as the great bulwark of their cauſe againſt the incroachments of chriſtianity. So long as this pillar of their faith remained unſhaken, the Jews had a ſenſible advantage over the chriſtian Gentiles. It furniſhed the infidel Jews with what they deemed an irrefragable argument, in anſwer to every thing that could be alleged, as an inducement to them to become chriſtians; and it likewiſe ſupplied the Judaizing teachers with their ſtrongeſt arguments, to prevail upon the Gentile converts to ſubmit to the inſtitutions of Moſes. The former alleged in behalf of their obſtinacy and unbelief, that, by becoming chriſtians, they could not be in a higher ſenſe *the people of God*, or more in the way of the divine favour, than they were already; and the very name of being *the peculiar people of God*, carried in the idea of it, ſomething ſo exceedingly glorious and enchanting, that, upon the inſtances of the Judaizing teachers, the Gentile converts could not ſatisfy themſelves with chriſtianity. They were made to believe that they muſt become proſelytes to Judaiſm, or, that they were no nearer being the peculiar people of God than they had been before.

With this argument on their ſide, the Jews and Judaizing teachers triumphed, and the chriſtian Gentiles were not a little embarraſſed; till St. Paul extricated them, by undertaking to prove, not only that all chriſtians, of whatever nation, tongue, or people, are the proper

children of Abraham, and lawful heirs of the promiſe made to him; but that they were the *only* proper children of Abraham, and the only rightful heirs of all the bleſſings that were to deſcend to his poſterity; in ſhort that chriſtians are entitled to all the prerogatives of the peculiar people of God, to the utter excluſion of the Jews as a nation.

Now, it appears to me, that this promiſe made to Abraham, and the honorary diſtinction of being *the peculiar people of God*, conſiſted of particulars of ſuch a nature, that it was impoſſible they ſhould be enjoyed by any other people than the Jews, the natural deſcendants of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob.

For this purpoſe I ſhall recite all the places in the book of Geneſis, in which we have any account of this promiſe made by God to Abraham, of bleſſings which were to deſcend to his poſterity. Gen. xii. 1—3. *Now, the Lord had ſaid unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's houſe, unto a land that I will ſhew thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bleſs thee, and make thy name great; and thou ſhalt be a bleſſing. And I will bleſs them that bleſs thee, and curſe him that curſeth thee; and in thee ſhall all families of the earth be bleſſed.* — xiii. 14—17. *And the Lord ſaid unto Abram, after that Lot was ſeparated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, north-ward, and ſouth-ward, and eaſt-ward, and weſt-ward: For all the land which thou ſeeſt, to thee will I give it, and to thy ſeed for ever. And I will make thy ſeed as the duſt of the earth; ſo that if a man*

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can number the duſt of the earth, then ſhall thy ſeed alſo be numbered. Ariſe, walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.—xv. 5. *And he brought him forth abroad, and ſaid, Look now towards heaven, and tell the ſtars if thou be able to number them; and he ſaid unto him, So ſhall thy ſeed be.* And 18—21. *In that ſame day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, ſaying, unto thy ſeed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river the river Euphrates: The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgaſhites, and the Jebuſites.*—xvii. 1—8. *And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and ſaid unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face; and God talked with him, ſaying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou ſhalt be a father of many nations. Neither ſhall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name ſhall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings ſhall come out of thee. And I will eſtabliſh my covenant between me and thee, and thy ſeed after thee, in their generations, for an everlaſting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy ſeed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and thy ſeed after thee, the land wherein thou art a ſtranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlaſting poſſeſſion; and I will be their God.*—xxii. 15—18.

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the ſecond time, and ſaid, By myſelf have I ſworn, ſaith the Lord, for becauſe thou haſt done this thing, and haſt not withheld thy ſon, thine only ſon: That in bleſſing I will bleſs thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy ſeed as the ſtars of the heaven, and as the ſand which is upon the ſea-ſhore; and thy ſeed ſhall poſſeſs the gate of his enemies; and in thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed; becauſe thou haſt obeyed my voice.

In theſe promiſes I can find nothing more than theſe four particulars.

1ſt, That the natural poſterity of Abraham ſhould become a numerous and proſperous people.

2dly, That they ſhould poſſeſs the land of Canaan.

3dly, That from them ſhould come the Meſſiah, in whom all the families of the earth ſhould be bleſſed. And,

Laſtly, That Jehovah would be *their God:* by which, probably, was meant, that they were to be under an extraordinary form of civil government, whereof God himſelf would be the ſupreme head and adminiſtrator.*

Theſe four articles compriſe the whole of what was promiſed to the ſeed of Abraham; and theſe are all the diſtinctions that conſtituted them *the peculiar people of God*; and from a

* It was promiſed to Abraham, that he ſhonld be *the father of many nations*, Gen. xvii. 5, 6. But this, I apprehend, implies nothing more than what was actually fulfilled in his natural poſterity; which did, in fact, conſiſt of many nations.

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view of them, it is eaſy to conclude, that, had this affair of the privileges of the ſeed of Abraham, been always underſtood in its natural and proper ſenſe, it could not but have been looked upon as both a very abſurd and a needleſs thing for the Gentiles to plead any right to them.

In the firſt place, they found a real claim upon a merely figurative title. For chriſtians are in no other ſenſe *the children of Abraham*, than as they are the imitators of his faith; and, in this ſenſe, they are, equally, the children and heirs of Noah, Moſes, David, and any other worthy, faithful men whatever. And, farther, as all the particular bleſſings that were promiſed, moſt manifeſtly belong to the *ſame* ſeed of Abraham, (for there is no other than *one ſeed* mentioned in the promiſe) the Gentile chriſtians, upon the very ſame pretence, that they contended to be the children of Abraham at all, and the heirs of any part of his bleſſing, might have crowded to Judea from all parts of the world, have expelled the Jews, and ſettled themſelves in the land of Canaan, as the undoubted and only rightful heirs of their forefather Abraham.

This point St. Paul himſelf argues with great clearneſs and ſtrength; only he doth not admit this concluſion. The promiſe, he juſtly obſerves, was made to Abraham and to his *ſeed* (in the ſingular number) not to *ſeeds* (which is in the plural.) The bleſſings (and all the bleſſings) are, therefore, confined to *one kind of ſeed*. And then, as he had before proved, that *the bleſſing of Abraham's ſeed was come upon the Gentiles*, it follows, from this argument, that *it comes on*

the Gentiles only. For if the Jews, by virtue of their being the natural deſcendants of Abraham, be admitted, though only as co-heirs, the bleſſings would then have been inherited by *ſeeds*, contrary to the expreſs tenor of the promiſe, a liberty never taken even with human contracts or teſtaments.

Gal. iii. 15—18. *Brethren, I ſpeak after the manner of men; though it be but a man's covenant, yet, if it be confirmed, no man diſannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his ſeed* [τω σπερμαῖι] *were the promiſes made. He ſaith not, And to ſeeds* [τοις σπερμασιν] *as of many; but as of one, And to thy ſeed, which is Chriſt,* [*i. e.* chriſtians, as Mr. Locke explains it.] *And this I ſay, that the covenant, which was confirmed before of God in Chriſt, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot diſannul, that it ſhould make the promiſe of none effect. For, if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promiſe; but God gave it to Abraham by promiſe.*

It ſeems to follow, therefore, that ſince, according to St. Paul, the very verbal tenor of the covenant that God made with Abraham, confines the bleſſings of it to his *faithful ſeed*, the *chriſtians*; the Jews, who were the ſeed of Abraham in a different ſenſe, had nothing at all promiſed to them. The promiſe itſelf excludeth them from all right to any of the bleſſings contained in it; and the Gentiles, as the proper children and heirs of Abraham, had the only juſt title to the whole.

But, ſecondly, to demonſtrate the utter abſurdity of the plea of the Gentiles to be heirs of the

the promiſe made to Abraham, it is obſervable, that nothing was promiſed to the ſeed of Abraham, which was, in the nature of things, compatible with the actual ſtate and condition of any other people than that of the Jews, who were his natural poſterity. For if it had been naturally poſſible for the Gentiles to have been the ſeed of Abraham intended in the promiſe, they might, very conſiſtently, have contended for the deſcent of the Meſſiah from a Gentile family, and have likewiſe laid claim to the particular providence, and divine form of government intailed upon the children of Abraham.

Thirdly, Nothing was promiſed to the ſeed of Abraham, but what the Jewiſh nation had actually inherited. They had been, and were, in fact, at that very time, a numerous people. They had poſſeſſed the land of Canaan, and were then in the indiſputed poſſeſſion of it. The Meſſiah, the deſire of all nations, was now actually come, deſcended from them. And, laſtly, the particular and divine form of civil government, under which they had been from the beginning of their nation, and which had been gradually declining till that very time, was then either in force, or wholly expired; there being no farther occaſion for any ſuch eſtabliſhment in the world. The ſeed of Abraham, therefore, had actually enjoyed all the bleſſings bequeathed to them.

Fourthly, and laſtly, It was altogether, *needleſs*, as well as abſurd, for the Gentiles to contend to be the ſeed of Abraham; for, though the promiſe was not made to them, and they

were not bleſſed directly as the ſeed of Abraham, they were, nevertheleſs, intereſted in it; for they were to be bleſſed by means of the ſeed to which the promiſe was made; according to the expreſs tenor of the promiſe, *In thee ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed.* But what nation of the earth could receive the bleſſing from the ſeed of Abraham, when there was not any nation upon earth that was not of the ſeed of Abraham?

Had this affair, therefore, I ſay, been rightly underſtood, the Gentiles would have looked upon it, both as an abſurd and a needleſs thing, to contend to be the children of Abraham, and the peculiar people of God; a diſtinction, honourable, indeed, while it ſubſiſted, but which perhaps was now no more. But the Jews had prodigiouſly enlarged, in their imaginations, the bleſſings and privileges belonging to the peculiar people of God, as the ſeed of Abraham. They had crowded into it a thouſand things, of flattering ſound, but of which they had formed no clear and diſtinct ideas. They had engroſſed to themſelves the Meſſiah, and all the bleſſings of his kingdom. They had even engroſſed to themſelves the Divine Being himſelf, with all his mercy, and all his divine communications.

The Abrahamic covenant, thus monſtrouſly ſwelled with a confuſed and indeterminate liſt of privileges, the Jews and Judaizing teachers diſplayed, with great pride and oſtentation, to the Gentiles; and they, not ſuſpecting any miſrepreſentation, immediately regarded theſe diſtinctions

diſtinctions with envious eyes. Preſently, they grow ſo diſſatisfied with bare chriſtianity, deſtitute of the flattering prerogatives the Jews boaſted of, that St. Paul, deſpairing to be able to undeceive them (or rather, having himſelf entertained the ſame raiſed opinion of the prerogatives of the ſeed of Abraham) endeavours to make them eaſy, by perſuading them that they were already the peculiar people of God, and even the children of Abraham, in the ſenſe that entitled them to the promiſes made to his ſeed.

That they were the proper *children* [τεκνα] of Abraham, who were the peculiar people of God, and entitled to all the bleſſings promiſed to him, St. Paul tacitly allows. "But then," ſays he "who are the proper children [τεκνα] of "Abraham? Not the mere *natural deſcendants*, "the mere ſeed [σπερμα] of that great patriarch. "For, as it was not to the direct heirs of "Abraham or Iſaac's body, that the bleſſings "deſcended, but only to ſuch of them as they "were limited to by the promiſe of God. So "we learn from hence, that, in no caſe what-"ever, had the mere natural deſcendants of the "patriarchs, and as ſuch, a right to the promi-"ſed bleſſings. No, before they can have this "right, they muſt be more than the mere chil-"dren of Abraham's fleſh; they muſt, in ſome "ſenſe, be *his children by promiſe*, the ſpiritual "ſeed of Abraham, the heirs and imitators of "his faith; ſuch as have that faith in the Meſ-"ſiah when come, which he had in the divine "promiſe of a ſon, by whom he ſhould come "into the world."

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Rom. ix. 3—12. *For I could wiſh that myſelf were accurſed from Chriſt for my brethren, my kinſmen, according to the fleſh; who are the Iſraelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the ſervice of God, and the promiſes; whoſe are the fathers; and of whom, according to the fleſh, Chriſt came! Whoſe* [in a particular manner, is Jehovah, who] *is God over all bleſſed for ever. Not as though the word of God had taken none effect; for they are not all Iſrael, who are of Iſrael; neither becauſe they are the ſeed* [σπερμα] *of Abraham, are they all children* [τεκνα] *but in Iſaac ſhall thy ſeed be called. That is, they who are the children of the fleſh, theſe are not the children of God; but the children of the promiſe are counted for the ſeed. For this is the word of promiſe, At this time will I come, and Sarah ſhall have a ſon. And not only this, but when Rebecca alſo had conceived by one, even by our father Iſaac,—It was ſaid unto her, The elder ſhall ſerve the younger.* Ver. 30—32. *What ſhall we ſay then! that the Gentiles which followed not after righteouſneſs, have attained to righteouſneſs, even the righteouſneſs which is of faith; but Iſrael, which followed after the law of righteouſneſs, have not attained to the law of righteouſneſs! Wherefore! Becauſe they ſought it not by faith, but, as it were, by the deeds of the law,: For they ſtumbled at that ſtumbling ſtone.*

He explains the Abrahamic covenant in the ſame manner in his epiſtle to the Galatians iii. 6—9. *Even as Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteouſneſs. Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the ſame are the children*

children of Abraham. And the ſcripture, foreſeeing that God would juſtify the heathen through faith, preached the goſpel before unto Abraham; ſaying, In thee ſhall all nations be bleſſed. So that, they who be of faith are bleſſed with faithful Abraham. And ver. 29. *And if ye be Chriſt's, then are ye Abraham's ſeed, and heirs, according to the promiſe.*

I own I ſee no reaſon to lay much ſtreſs on the diſtinction that St. Paul makes betwixt [τεκνα] and [σπερμα] *children*, and *ſeed*, a diſtinction that ſeems to have no foundation either in the ſcriptures, or in the received ſenſe of words. For, according to the *ſeventy*, it was to *Abraham and his ſeed*, [σπερμαῖι] *that the promiſe was made.*

But St. Paul, in this place, farther advances two other diſtinct arguments, to exclude the natural Jews from the inheritance of the bleſſing of their progenitor Abraham. In the firſt place, they could not inherit the *bleſſing*, on account of the *curſe* they lay under, for not fulfilling the law of Moſes. And would it not be a manifeſt abſurdity to pronounce them *bleſſed* and *curſed* at the ſame time. The Jews, however, were accurſed on no other account, than ſuch as any other nation in general, any good man in particular, or, even the chriſtians themſelves would have been accurſed. For, *what man is there upon earth that doeth good, and ſinneth not.* And the law of Moſes, according to St. Paul's account of it, ſhews no favour, but condemns all tranſgreſſors without exception. Moreover, the bleſſings that were to deſcend to Abraham's poſterity, as they conſiſted of *external privileges* only, were of ſuch a nature, as not

to

to be incompatible, even with a bad character; much leſs with imperfect virtue in the poſſeſſor. For what ſhould hinder that the Jews, though ſinners, and accurſed, could not be a numerous people, poſſeſs the land of Canaan, be ſuperintended by a particular providence, and have the Meſſiah deſcend from them. And theſe, as I have ſhewn, were all the bleſſings that were promiſed to the ſeed of Abraham. This argument, however, is urged by St. Paul, in the following manner.

Gal. iii. 9—12. *So then, they who be of faith are bleſſed with faithful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curſe; for, it is written, Curſed is he that continueth not in all things, that are written in the book of the law to do them. But, that no man is juſtified by the law in the ſight of God is evident, for, The juſt ſhall live by faith; and the law is not of faith, but, The man that doth them ſhall live in them.*

But this curſe, which cut off the Jews from the inheritance of their forefathers, is removed from us chriſtians by Chriſt; as St. Paul informs us Gal. iii. 13, 14. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us: for, it is written, Curſed is every one that hangeth on a tree; that the bleſſing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, through Jeſus Chriſt, that we might receive the promiſe of the ſpirit through faith.*

It ſhould ſeem that both juſtification and the promiſe of the ſpirit, are here repreſented by the apoſtle, as included in the bleſſing that was to deſcend from Abraham to his ſeed; though nothing

nothing like either of them be found in any account we have of this promiſe in the book of Geneſis; and, certainly, theſe particulars were of too great conſequence, not to have been expreſsly inſerted, had they really made a part of it.

His other argument, for the excluſion of the Jews, is a proper ſequel to either of the preceding, in which he hath proved, ſimply, that the Gentile chriſtians were the proper children and rightful heirs of Abraham. But I have already anticipated it, when I ſhewed, that if the believing Gentiles be heirs to *any part* of the bleſſings which were to deſcend to the ſeed of Abraham, they were heirs to *the whole*, and his *only* heirs, there not being two heirs mentioned in the promiſe. The Gentiles, therefore, having been proved to be heirs, the Jews are, of courſe, entirely excluded.

St. Paul's argument, in the following paſſage, is ſo much the ſame with ſome of the preceding, and even expreſſed ſo much in the ſame manner, that, after what hath been obſerved concerning them, it is needleſs to add any thing concerning this in particular. Only let it be noted, that, in this place, he more plainly derives the forgiveneſs of ſin, and the imputation of righteouſneſs, from our ſpiritual relation to, and deſcent from Abraham.

Rom. vi. 6—16. *Even as David alſo deſcribeth the bleſſedneſs of the man to whom God imputeth righteouſneſs without works; ſaying, bleſſed are they whoſe iniquities are forgiven, and whoſe ſins are covered; Bleſſed is the man to whom the Lord will*

will not impute ſin. Cometh this bleſſedneſs then upon the circumciſion only, or upon the uncircumciſion alſo? For we ſay that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteouſneſs. How was it then reckoned, when he was in circumciſion, or in uncircumciſion? Not in circumciſion, but in uncircumciſion. And he received the ſign of circumciſion, a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of the faith, which he had yet being uncircumciſed: That he might be the father of all that believe, though they be not circumciſed; that righteouſneſs might be imputed unto them alſo; And the father of circumciſion, not of them who are of the circumciſion only, but who alſo walk in the ſteps of that faith which he had yet being uncircumciſed. For the promiſe that he ſhould be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his ſeed, through the law, but through the righteouſneſs of faith. For if they who are of the law be made heirs, faith is made void, and the promiſe made of none effect: Becauſe the law worketh wrath, for where no law is, there is no tranſgreſſion. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the promiſe might be ſure to all the ſeed; not to that only which is of the law, but that, alſo, which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.

But how is faith, either the faith of Abraham, the faith of Chriſtians, or any other faith, made void, and what promiſe is made of none effect, though the Jews, who were of the law, be admitted to be heirs; when there was not in the covenant itſelf, any promiſe made to any other than the natural deſcendants of Abraham? And what pretence could the Gentile converts to chriſtianity have to complain of a breach of promiſe,

promiſe, when no promiſe was ever made to them.

Thus we ſee the Jews cut off at once from being the children [τεκνα] of Abraham, and, conſequently, diſinherited of their privileges of adoption, and the other bleſſings of the promiſe, and the Gentiles ſubſtituted in their place; who, for their faith in Chriſt, are deemed worthy to be regarded as the only proper children, and the only rightful heirs of Abraham, the father of us all; agreeable to the figure of the *olive tree*, by which St. Paul, in the 11th chapter of his epiſtle to the Romans, repreſents the rejection of the Jews, and the adoption of the Gentiles in their place. And, laſt of all, St. Paul, as it were, to complete his triumph over this unhappy nation, diſputes even their right to be called *Jews*, as an appellation of too much honour, and calls in queſtion the reality or the validity of their circumciſion.

Rom. ii. 28, 29. *For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumciſion, which is outward in the fleſh: But he is a Jews which is one inwardly, and circumciſion is that of the heart, in the ſpirit, and not in the letter; whoſe praiſe is not of men but of God.*

I Think myſelf very much obliged to W. W. for his attempt to illuſtrate St. Paul's reaſoning about the effects of the ſin of Adam, and am truly ſorry to ſay that ſo candid and ingenious a writer, as he appears to be, has not given me ſatisfaction.

I cannot

I cannot help concluding that the *death* with which Adam was threatened, in caſe of his eating the forbidden fruit, was *mortality*, and not *the actual and immediate inflicting of death*; becauſe I think that the puniſhment, according to its real import, muſt have taken place, when threatening was ſo very expreſs. Gen. ii. 17. *In the day that thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt ſurely die.*

W. W. admits that Adam and his poſterity die in conſequence of being turned out of paradiſe, and excluded from acceſs to the tree of life; but ſuppoſes that he was mortal before. Now I do not think that it will make any difference in the preſent argument, whether Adam was created naturally immortal, or placed within the reach of the means that would infallibly make him ſo. But St. Paul, in the paſſage we are remarking upon, is labouring to prove, that the mortality of the whole human race is not the natural conſequence, but the *poſitive puniſhment* of the ſin of Adam; as much ſo as the gift of eternal life is the proper reward of the obedience of Chriſt. Rom. v. 18. *As by the offence one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, ſo by the righteouſneſs of one the free gift came upon all men unto juſtification of life.* So alſo 1 Cor. xv. 22. *As in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.*

I cannot help concluding, therefore, that thoſe who died under the law of Moſes did not, as St. Paul ſuppoſes, *ſin after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion*, becauſe the penalty was very different; and conſequently, that men dying on account of Adam's ſin (which I admit) is not

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at all more evident from the conſideration of the mortality of thoſe who died in the interval between Adam and Moſes.

But I am willing to wave this ground of my objection, and am ready to adopt W. W.'s hypotheſis, that man was originally mortal, and that the proper puniſhment of Adam's tranſgreſſion was *the actual and immediate infliction of death*, on himſelf, if it will at all help St. Paul's reaſoning; but it appears to me, that the apoſtle will be no gainer by the change.

If Adam was threatened with nothing but his own immediate death, the mortality of his poſterity muſt be aſcribed to ſome other cauſe, than that which St. Paul expreſsly aſſigns for it, as I obſerved before; ſo that inſtead of objecting, as I do, to the propriety of a medium of proof, W. W. denies the very thing the apoſtle is endeavouring to prove by it.

Beſides, without having recourſe to what is called the *law of nature* (the law written upon the hearts of all men) there *was* a *poſitive law* of God, with the penalty of death for the offence, in the interval between Adam and Moſes, and as expreſs as any under Moſes. For the crime of murder was appointed to be puniſhed with death, in the command given to Noah, upon his leaving the ark; and this was a command deſigned to extend to the whole human race, whereas thoſe laws of Moſes, which had the ſanction of that penalty, were obligatory on a few only, Gen. ix. 56. *At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoſo ſheddeth man's blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed: for in the image of God made he man.*

In no ſenſe, therefore, do I ſee that it can be true, that men ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion after the law of Moſes, more than in the interval between him and Adam.

I would obſerve, farther, that if the breach of a law, the penalty of which was *the actual and immediate infliction of death*, was *ſinning after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion*, very few under the law of Moſes did ſo ſin; and therefore the death of thoſe perſons who had not been guilty of the particular crimes the penalty of which was death, would have been as much to St. Paul's purpoſe, as any in the interval between Adam and Moſes; or indeed the death of any but the Jews, to whom only the law of Moſes extended. For all theſe would have been alike, caſes in which men died who had tranſgreſſed no law of which death was the expreſs penalty; ſo that if *death* univerſally *came by ſin*, we muſt look for the cauſe of it, not in their own ſin, but that of ſome others.

Laſtly, the death that was the penalty of the laws given to Noah and Moſes, was not a natural but a violent death. *Whoſo ſheddeth man's blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed*; ſo that no natural death can be conſidered, according to this hypotheſis, as the proper puniſhment of a man's own ſin.

I hope I ſhall not offend W. W. or any other ſerious chriſtian, by the freedom of theſe remarks, which tend to throw a charge of haſte and inadvertence upon St. Paul, as a controverſial writer. My ultimate deſign is the ſame with

with that of all thoſe who wiſh well to the goſpel, viz. to free it from every thing that is an unneceſſary clog upon it, and that may hinder its general reception among mankind. With this view, I ſhall occaſionally ſend you other obſervations, ſimilar to thoſe that I have already ſent you; and I ſhall be obliged to W. W. or any other of your learned correſpondents, if they will conſider them. I ſhall endeavour to keep my mind open to conviction, and I promiſe to avow it the moment it is produced.

I am, gentlemen,

Your very humble ſervant,

PAULINUS.

P. S. I do not perceive that DION, vol. 1. p. 451. has made any anſwer to my doubts concerning the validity of the apoſtleſhip of Matthias, but what I had conſidered in my obſervations on that ſubject. The deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon Matthias, as well as upon the reſt of the apoſtles, could not be a confirmation of the choice the eleven had made of him to fill the place of Judas, becauſe it is expreſsly ſaid, that the Holy Ghoſt came upon all the aſſembly, and, for any thing we know, without any viſible diſtinction of perſons. Acts ii. 1—3. The apoſtles, indeed, ſeem, in general, to have had the privilege of giving the Holy Ghoſt, by the impoſition of their hands; but St. Paul both received his ſight and the Holy Ghoſt by the hands of Ananias, who was no apoſtle. Acts ix. 17. If the apo-

ſtles had this excluſive power, and all of them frequently exerciſed it, it could not but have been known, whether Matthias was an apoſtle or not; and, in this caſe, his being numbered among the apoſtles by Luke, would be authority ſufficient for our concluding that he was really one of them; but I queſtion whether theſe facts be ſo well aſcertained as to warrant that concluſion.

If Paul was converted in the firſt year after our Lord's crucifixion, he muſt have preached the goſpel to the *Jews only*, almoſt as long as any other of the apoſtles.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

Whether the following attempt to ſhew that, in fact, chriſtianity was expoſed to ridicule from its firſt introduction into the world, till it became the eſtabliſhed religion of the Roman empire, *may come within the plan of the* Repoſitory, *or whether it be worthy of a place in it, is ſubmitted to your judgment, by*

Your very humble ſervant,

EUSEBIUS.

I Perfectly agree with Lord Shaftſbury, that freedom of inquiry into religious ſubjects ought to be encouraged and practiſed; that ſuch inquiries ſhould be engaged in when we are in the beſt temper, and that "good hu-

"mour

" mour is the beſt foundation of *piety* and *true* " *religion.*" But I have ſome doubts of the propriety of his propoſal for applying *wit*, *raillery* and *ridicule* as a teſt of the true value of religious matters; becauſe, as his Lordſhip acknowledges, there is a right and wrong, a true and falſe in wit and humour; and ridicule may be well or ill placed; theſe, therefore, muſt themſelves be tried firſt by ſome other ſtandards, properly employed, as rules whereby to judge of other things. It ſeems to me, that the ſubject to which ridicule is applied, ſhould be well examined and underſtood, and ridicule itſelf carefully analized, and then a judgment may be formed of the propriety of its application. Till this be done I do not ſee how we can give it any further credit, than for a tranſient amuſement and ſmile, without running great riſque of being deceived and betrayed.

I am very ſenſible, that ridicule often proves, in fact, a very ſevere teſt of *men*; both of the principles and genius of thoſe who attempt to employ it, and of the underſtandings and fortitude of thoſe againſt whom it is directed; but as for *religious opinions and practices*, though their ſpread in the world may be conſiderably affected thereby, yet their truth or falſehood, good or evil, ought, certainly, to be decided by other more direct and appropriate criteria.

His Lordſhip is pleaſed to ſay, " I never " heard that the ancient heathens were ſo well " adviſed in their ill purpoſe of ſuppreſſing the " chriſtian religion in its firſt riſe, as to make " uſe, at any time, of this Bart'lemy fair me-

" thod. But this, I am perſuaded of, that had " the truth of the goſpel been any way ſur- " mountable, they would have bid much fairer " for the ſilencing it, if they had choſen to " bring our primitive founders upon the ſtage " in a pleaſanter way, than that of bear ſkins " and pitch barrels." *

I refer to others to judge of the propriety and decorum of connecting the low and ludicrous images of *bear ſkins and pitch barrels* to the ſhocking cruelties, which diſgrace the hiſtory of mankind, but were wantonly inflicted on perſons, who, by acting from the full conviction of their underſtandings in the profeſſion they made of the goſpel, by ſteadfaſtly enduring the worſt ſufferings in obeying God rather than man, and by their dependance on the promiſes they firmly believed God had made to them by Jeſus, did honour to human nature. I would only obſerve, that here we have a ſpecimen of the genuine operations of *ridicule*, ſufficient to warn us not to admit its pleaſantries unexamined.

His Lordſhip ſays, that he never heard that the ancient heathens were ſo well adviſed as to make uſe, at any time, of this Bart'lemy fair method, viz. of *puppet-ſhews*. But is it a point yet ſettled among the antiquarians, that the ancients had any ſuch ſhews? Perhaps, the genius of latter ages may claim the honour of the invention of this *maſter-piece of humour*. But ſuppoſing that the facetious family of the *Punches* can be traced ſo far back, is it at all

* Letter concerning Enthuſiaſm, Sec. iii.

ſtrange,

ſtrange, that his Lordſhip doth not find any of their drolleries againſt chriſtianity recorded by the hiſtorians, and other writers of thoſe times, which have come down to us?

Doth Lord Shaftſbury mean, that the ancient heathens were not ſo well adviſed, as to make uſe of ſuch modes of humour and ridicule, as were then practiſed, for the ſuppreſſion of chriſtianity? I believe many of his admirers apprehend that he means to inſinuate this; and taking it on the credit of his learning, that this was the real fact, and on the credit of his judgment, that, if ridicule had been properly employed, it would probably have been effectual to ſuppreſs chriſtianity in its riſe, greatly regret the unlucky overſight. Let us then inquire a little into this matter.

It is well known that the Romans, as well as Greeks, had theatrical entertainments of various kinds in high perfection; that they were freely employed to purpoſes of ridicule, and that the people were extremely fond of them; particularly, at *that time*, when the emperor Nero himſelf honoured the ſcene with his own buffooneries. It is true, we have but very ſcanty materials left for a hiſtory of the wit and humour of the Roman ſtage at this period; but is it at all likely, that while the chriſtians were objects of the extremeſt popular odium, and imperial fury, they ſhould wholly eſcape the ridicule of the comedians, and the ludicrous exhibitions of the pantomimes, who, perhaps, were not inferior in the powers of humour, even to his Lordſhip's favourites, the wooden ſatiriſts. While Nero

dreſſed them in *bear ſkins* to be worried by dogs for the people's diverſion, and burnt them in *pitch barrels* to enlighten the city by night, who can doubt that any ſpecies of ridicule was neglected, that might ſerve to indulge the public ſpleen, and countenance the imperial proceedings? No, no; wits and actors, in all ages, underſtand their buſineſs, and watch the temper of the times and of the court better.

But let us attend a little to the order of times and facts, ſo far as the informations we have will ſerve us.

The miniſtry of Jeſus was confined to the Jews, of whom this noble writer obſerves,* that they "were naturally a very cloudy "people, and could endure little raillery in "any thing; much leſs in what belonged to "any religious doctrines or opinions. Religion "was looked upon with a ſullen eye, and hanging was the only remedy they could preſcribe "for any thing which looked like ſetting up a "new revelation. The ſovereign argument "was *Crucify, Crucify.* But with all their malice "and inveteracy to our Saviour, and his apoſtles after him, had they but taken the fancy "to act ſuch puppet-ſhews in his contempt, as "at this hour the papiſts are acting in his "honour, I am apt to think they might poſſibly have done our religion more harm, than "by all their other ways of ſeverity."

But though the Jews could *endure* little raillery, perhaps they might have no averſion to

* Id. ibid.

uſe

uſe it againſt any thing they diſliked, when it might ſerve their turn. Ay; but then, it will be ſaid, it was of the groſs and barbarous kind; there was not an atom of genteel, ſprightly and penetrating wit in the whole nation.—This is more than we know; and it was well ſaid, *male dicitur, quod in multos.* However, we know by experience, that groſs jokes penetrate as deep, and produce as laſting effects on the minds of the vulgar, as the moſt elegant *bons mots* on more refined ſpirits.

That the Jews did not ſpare to employ againſt Jeſus ſuch ridicule as they were maſters of, and that too upon ſome occaſions that indicate a very ſtrong propenſity to it, will, I think, appear from the following inſtances recorded by the evangeliſts, who were not likely to treaſure up every thing of that kind.

When Jeſus went to reſtore Jairus's daughter to life, not long after the commencement of his miniſtry, and ſaid to the minſtrels and the people, who were exhibiting all the parade and ceremony of grief, *Give place, for the maid is not dead, but ſleepeth*; we are told, that they very ſuddenly changed their note, *and laughed him to ſcorn*;* from which inſtance one would think, the Jews were naturally a very tittering, rather than a vey cloudy people.

Again, when he was diſcourſing on a very grave ſubject, viz. the indiſpenſable neceſſity of ſimplicity of principles, and integrity of conduct, ſuperior to worldly allurements, in order to con-

* Matt. ix. 24.

ſtitute

ſtitute a perſon truly religious, and to obtain the acceptance of God, we are told* that *the phariſees, who were covetous, heard all theſe things; and they derided him.*

When his miniſtry was drawing towards its cloſe, and the people were divided in their opinions about him, we are told† that *many of them ſaid, he hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?* Indeed we find he was often complimented with the names of Galilæan, Samaritan, Demoniac, and the like.

Thus it appears, that *hanging* was not the only remedy the Jews could preſcribe for any thing which looked like ſetting up a new revelation. They could make a plentiful uſe of nicknames, ſneers, and the horſe laugh, as they found occaſion, to baffle the force of the moſt rational arguments, and eraſe the impreſſions of incroaching convictions, as well as more cultivated and polite people uſually do.

But let us proceed to that period when they employed what his Lordſhip calls, their ſovereign argument, *Crucify, Crucify*; and I apprehend we ſhall find it a very ſtrange ſcene for *merriment*, as well as other extraordinary circumſtances.

Jeſus had himſelf foretold‡ that he ſhould be mocked, and ſpitefully entreated, and ſpitted on: accordingly when he was condemned by the high-prieſt and elders, as *guilty of death*, we are told§ that *the ſervants who held Jeſus, mocked*

* Luke xvi. 14. † John x. 20. ‡ Luke xviii. 32. § Matt. xxvi. 67. Luke xxii. 63.

him,

him, and ſpitted in his face, and buffetted him, and blindfolded him, and ſmote him with the palms of their hands, ſaying, Propheſy unto us, thou Chriſt, who is he that ſmote thee. Surely, *Punch* himſelf could not have been more inſolent or ſatirical than theſe Jewiſh footmen.

When Pilate ſent Jeſus to Herod, and that prince found he could not obtain from him the gratification of his curioſity, he had ſo long wiſhed for, *by ſeeing ſome miracle done by him*, we are told * that *Herod, with his men of war, ſet him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and ſent him again to Pilate.* It appears alſo, that this affair put the prince into high good humour, ſince it immediately effected a reconciliation of the quarrel which had for ſome time ſubſiſted between him and Pilate.

When Jeſus, thus dreſſed out, was led back to the governor's tribunal, and Pilate had yielded to the Jews' ſovereign argument, *Crucify, Crucify*, we are told † that as the high-prieſt's ſervants had mocked his prophetic character and pretenſions to meſſiahſhip, ſo the ſoldiers of the governor ridiculed his regal pretenſions, or at leaſt the title of king, which had been given him by the people. *They took him into the common hall and gathered to them the whole band of ſoldiers, and they ſtripped him, and put on him a ſcarlet robe; and when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him,*

* Luke xxiii. 11. † Matt. xxvii. 27.

and

and mocked him, ſaying, Hail, king of the Jews. And they ſpit upon him, and took the reed, and ſmote him on the head. And after they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him and led him out to crucify him.

When I read theſe tranſactions at the high-prieſt's, Herod's and Pilate's palaces, I am ſtruck with obſerving, that they approach very near to exhibiting, in real fact, what Lord Shaftſbury is apt to think if the Jews had done, they would have done our religion more harm than by all their other ways of ſeverity, *i. e.* had they but taken the fancy to act ſuch puppet-ſhews in contempt of our Saviour, as at this hour the papiſts are acting in his honour. Real puppet-ſhews, I am fully perſuaded, the Jews had none; for, on account of their utter averſion againſt all ſorts of images in that age, *Punch*, with all his impiety and profaneneſs, could have had no ſort of toleration among them. However, they acted, more than once, a perfect puppet-ſhew with the perſon of Jeſus, and that with as many circumſtances of mockery and contempt againſt him, as his wittieſt or bittereſt enemies could well wiſh.

But let us attend him to the laſt ſcene; and here the drollery grows exceſſive and ſhocking indeed. When he was lifted up as a *ſpectacle* on the croſs, and two thieves were crucified with him for his greater reproach, one on each hand, we are told* that *they that paſſed by reviled him, wagging their heads, and ſaying, Thou that de-*

* Matt. xxvii. 39, 40.

ſtroyeſt

ſtroyeſt the temple, and buildeſt it in three days, ſave thyſelf: If thou be the ſon of God, come down from the croſs. But well might a thoughtleſs mob be thus pitileſs and inſulting, when the very chief-prieſts, forgetting the ſanctity and dignity of their office, and the ſcribes and elders, regardleſs of the gravity and all the decencies of their characters, turned ſcoffing buffoons, mocking him and ſaying, *He ſaved others, himſelf he cannot ſave: If he be the king of Iſrael, let him now come down from the croſs, and we will believe him. He truſted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he ſaid, I am the ſon of God.** *The ſoldiers alſo mocked him, coming to him and offering him vinegar, and ſaying, If thou be the king of the Jews, ſave thyſelf*; nay even one of the malefactors who ſuffered with him, † *railed on him, ſaying, If thou be the Chriſt, ſave thyſelf and us.* Sure, never did ſo ſtrong, ſo univerſal and extravagant a ſpirit of ſneer and ridicule manifeſt itſelf on any other ſimilar occaſion. The whole attack too was pointed againſt his pretenſions to the meſſiahſhip; that principle on which all his claims, and all the authority of his doctrine was founded. If raillery be really ſo formidable an antagoniſt as is ſuppoſed, ſuch a torrent of it muſt have ſwept away the very names of Jeſus and the goſpel into everlaſting oblivion; for never could it be employed with leſs reſtraint, or more advantages of time and circumſtances, than when magiſtrates and people, prieſts and laity, ſoldiers and malefactors, all concurred

* Luke xxiii. 36. † Verſe 39.

to

to overwhelm with ſneers and mockery Jeſus ſuſpended on the croſs.

But it ſeems the pleaſant humour is not yet over; let us ſee how it proceeds. It was obſerved before, that the chief-prieſts and elders, among other inſults, had ſaid, *He truſted in God, let him deliver him now, if he will have him.* Though, perhaps, they did not intend a quotation, theſe happen to be very nearly the words of the 22d Pſalm, ver. 8. Now, Jeſus, hearing them utter theſe words, took the opportunity, himſelf, to pronounce aloud the firſt words of that Pſalm,* *Eli, Eli, lama-ſabachthani? that is to ſay, My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me*; probably with intention to lead theſe learned divines to reflect on the other particulars contained in that Pſalm, that they might perceive, that they themſelves, and the reſt, were at that moment fulfilling many expreſs and remarkable predictions, contained in that prophetic piece; and, conſequently, that many atteſtations to his meſſiahſhip were then exhibiting.

However, ſome of the gay ſpirits preſent caught up the word *Eli*, and converted it into a pun.† *Some of them that ſtood there, when they heard that, ſaid, This man calleth for Elias; and ſtraightway one of them ran, and took a ſpunge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink.* This miſerable witticiſm, it ſeems, was not loſt, but picked up and bandied about among the crowd.‡ *The reſt ſaid, Let be, let us ſee whether Elias will come to*

* Matt. xxvii. 46. † Ver. 47. ‡ Ver. 49.

ſave

ſave him. Who can tell how far this inhuman drollery would have proceeded, or where it would have ſtopped, had it not been quaſhed by certain ſerious events that then enſued; ſuch as a three-hours preternatural darkneſs, and a violent earthquake, by which the rocks were rent.

Upon the whole; it is certainly wrong to inſinuate, that our holy religion was not ſubjected to the teſt of ridicule at its firſt introduction and eſtabliſhment in the world. The fact turns out the reverſe; Jeſus was attacked by the Jews with all the powers of ridicule and mockery they were maſters of, long before they cried *crucify, crucify him*; probably during the whole courſe of his miniſtry; and, at length, they exerted every effort of mockery, as well as malice, in that ſeaſon moſt critical to our religion, *i. e.* at the ignominious death of its author, when all his enemies triumphed, and all his friends deſpaired. Surely, if raillery have the powers that are attributed to it, the world would have heard no more of Jeſus or his doctrine.

Let us now proceed to obſerve what treatment, of a like kind, the apoſtles of Jeſus met with after his departure. Their maſter had already taught them to expect to encounter reproaches ſimilar to thoſe which himſelf had ſuffered. Matt. x. 24, 25. *The diſciple is not above his maſter, nor the ſervant above his Lord. It is enough for the diſciple, that he be as his maſter, and the ſervant as his Lord; if they have called the maſter of the houſe Beelzebub, how much more ſhall they call them of his houſehold.* No ſooner had the

apoſtles received power from on high to preach and propagate the goſpel, as they had received commiſſion, by the wonderful gifts of the Holy Ghoſt conferred on them at the following pentecoſt, and in particular, were enabled to expreſs themſelves freely in various languages; but, while the foreigners, out of many nations, who then reſided at Jeruſalem,* *were amazed, and marvelled, ſaying one to another, Behold, are not all theſe which ſpeak Galileans? and how do we hear them ſpeak in our tongues the wonderful works of God*; others, probably the natives of Jeruſalem and Judea, who knew no language beſides that of their own country, *mocking, ſaid, Theſe men are full of new wine.*

It is eaſy to ſuppoſe, as, indeed, it appears to be fact, that the excellent doctrines and lives of the apoſtles and their converts, together with the manifeſtation of the hand of God with them, in the multitude of beneficent miracles wrought by their means, would ſecure the veneration and reſpect, at leaſt, of the better and more rational part of the nation, and that this would have conſiderable effect to repreſs the inſolence and impertinences of the more licentious; beſides, they always manifeſted a magnanimity under ſeverer trials, which would ſet them far above raillery, and all harmleſs expreſſions of contempt. No wonder, then, that in their writings and hiſtory we find little notice taken of ſuch inconſiderable oppoſitions; but we do find notice taken of more important ſufferings being mingled

* Acts ii. 7, &c.

and

and imbittered with circumſtances of diſgrace and contumely; and that this was the caſe, not only with the apoſtles, but alſo with the chriſtians in general. As to the apoſtles, St. Paul deſcribes the treatment they met with in the world, and his own feelings of it, and behaviour under it, in the following manner,* *For I think that God hath ſet forth us the apoſtles laſt, as it were appointed to death*; alluding to the cuſtom of expoſing criminals, when condemned to die, to all ſorts of reproach and affronts by whoever pleaſed to inſult them, as we have ſeen practiſed in the caſe of Jeſus Chriſt. *For we are made a ſpectacle unto the world, and to angels and to men. Even unto this preſent hour we both hunger and thirſt, and are naked, and are buffetted, and have no certain dwelling-place, and labour, working with our own hands; being reviled we bleſs; being perſecuted we ſuffer it; being defamed we intreat; we are made,* i. e. treated, *as the filth of the world, the off-ſcouring of all things unto this day.*

As to the converts to chriſtianity, we may judge how they were uſed by their neighbours, from what the apoſtle writes to the Hebrews,† *But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions. Partly whilſt ye were made a gazing-ſtock,* (θεατριζομενοι, like perſons exhibited as a ſpectacle on the theatres for the diverſion of the people; perhaps the word imports, that they themſelves were ſo exhibited, at leaſt repreſented by the actors in the moſt ridiculous figures and

* 1 Cor. iv. 9, &c. † Ch. x. 32, 33.

characters; however, it certainly imports a very public ridicule and contemptuous uſage) *both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly while ye became companions of them that were ſo uſed.* On this account the apoſtles found it neceſſary often to admoniſh their converts not to ſuffer themſelves to be diſcouraged by the contempt, reproach and ſlander thrown upon them by unbelievers. Thus Paul exhorts the Hebrews in the verſes following thoſe I have juſt now quoted. Thus Peter alſo writes,* *If ye ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake, happy are ye; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled. But ſanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an anſwer to every man that aſketh of you a reaſon of the hope that is in you with meekneſs and fear. Having a good conſcience; that whereas they ſpeak evil of you as of evil-doers, they may be aſhamed that falſely accuſe your good converſation in Chriſt. For it is better, if the will of God be ſo, that ye ſuffer for well-doing than for evil-doing.* And again,† *if ye be reproached for the name of Chriſt, happy are ye; for the ſpirit of glory and of God reſteth upon you; on their part he is evil ſpoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you ſuffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a buſy-body in other men's matters. Yet, if any man ſuffer as a chriſtian, let him not be aſhamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.* The apoſtles are alſo very careful to caution chriſtians, in every thing, to avoid what ever might give occaſion to unbelievers to reproach them or their profeſſion. Thus in the appointment of miniſters St. Paul directs,‡

* 1 Ep. iii. 14, &c. † Ch. iv. 14. ‡ 1 Tim. iii. 6, 7.

Not

Not to appoint *a novice, leſt, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he muſt have a good report of them that are without, leſt he fall into reproach, and the ſnare of the devil,* or the accuſer, διαβολὸς. In like manner he preſcribes the proper conduct of the widows,* that they may *give none occaſion to the adverſary to ſpeak reproachfully.* Chriſtian ſervants alſo are required to *count their own maſters worthy of all honour; that the name of God and his doctrine be not blaſphemed.* 1 Tim. vi. 1.

Many other paſſages of the apoſtolic writings might be produced in evidence, that the unbelievers were by no means ſparing in aſſaulting chriſtianity and its profeſſors with ridicule, mockery, reproach and defamation; in ſhort, with the whole artillery, and in all the forms of the wordy war. Alluding to his Lordſhip's words, they really did bring them on the ſtage *in the pleaſanter way of ridicule,* long before they exhibited them in *bear ſkins* and *pitch barrels*; and, it ſeems moſt likely, that they did not employ the latter method, till after they had experienced the inefficacy of the former.

We have the largeſt and moſt circumſtantial account of the miniſtry and preaching of St. Paul, as well as the greateſt number of his letters, recorded in the New Teſtament; let us then take notice of ſome occurrences that happened to him, as a ſample of the manner in which the goſpel and its preachers were enter-

* 1 Tim. v. 14.

tained by the unbelievers. Beſides whippings, bonds, impriſonments, ſtoning, and the outrages of mobs, we find the apoſtle attacked with vehement contradiction and virulent language. At Antioch in Piſidia, when the unbelieving Jews ſaw the multitudes of Gentiles who flocked to hear him,* *They were filled with envy, and ſpake againſt thoſe things which were ſpoken by Paul, contradicting and blaſpheming.* When at Corinth he teſtified to the Jews, *That Jeſus was Chriſt,*† *they oppoſed themſelves and blaſphemed.*

Eccleſiaſtical tradition repreſents Paul as *Homo tricubitalis*, a perſon of diminutive ſtature and mean appearance, &c. himſelf ſpeaks ‡ of certain *infirmities*, which he calls, *a thorn in the fleſh, the meſſenger of Satan to buffet him, leſt he ſhould be exalted above meaſure with the abundance of the revelations which had been given him*, and ſays, *he had beſought the Lord thrice that it might depart from him.* What the particular infirmity was, to which he alludes, we know not; ſome have thought it might be an impediment or ſtammering in his utterance. Whatever it was, he adds, *Moſt gladly will I rather glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Chriſt may reſt upon me. Therefore I take pleaſure in infirmities, in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions, in diſtreſſes for Chriſt's ſake.*

However the apoſtle's mean figure and infirmities became, it ſeems, a common topic of contemptuous and biting reflections, not only

* Acts xiii. 45. † Ch. xviii. 6. ‡ 1 Cor. xii. 7, &c.

among

among unbelievers, but alſo among ſome profeſſors of chriſtianity who oppoſed him.* *His letters* (ſaid they) *are weighty and powerful, but his bodily preſence is weak, and his ſpeech contemptible.*

But let us attend Paul at Athens, and obſerve what treatment he found among the wits and philoſophers of that polite city. His Lordſhip ſays,† 'I believe our great and learned apoſtle, 'found leſs advantage from the eaſy treatment 'of his Athenian antagoniſts, than from the 'ſurly and curſt ſpirit of the moſt perſecuting 'Jewiſh cities.' Let us ſee then what this eaſy treatment was; for here his Lordſhip ſeems to allow, that the apoſtle, and chriſtianity which he preached, were for once ſubjected to the teſt of ridicule, of whoſe powers we are taught to conceive ſo high an idea.

We are told, Acts xvii. 16, &c. *While Paul waited at Athens, his ſpirit was ſtirred in him, when he ſaw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore he diſputed in the ſynagogue with the Jews, and with the devout perſons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. Then certain philoſophers, of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him; and ſome ſaid, What will this babler ſay?* Vaſtly polite indeed; but where is the wit of this! Why it ſeems there is an equivocation in the word σπερμολογος, which our tranſlators have rendered *babler*; but its original meaning is *ſeed-picker*, and was a name given to little deſpicable birds that picked up grains of corn or

* 2 Cor. x. 10. † Ibid.

ſeeds, which happened to be ſcattered in the markets, ſtreets or other places. Afterwards it came to be applied to idle fellows, who got a livelihood by telling, and carrying ſtories about, or other low and baſe practices; and, no doubt, was thought to hit off very aptly Paul's diminutive ſize and mean figure. Admirable ſpecimen this of the Attic ſalt! However, I dare ſay, the apoſtle would be very *eaſy* indeed under this deſpicable ſarcaſm. Others ſaid, *He ſeemeth to be a ſetter forth of ſtrange gods; becauſe he preached unto them Jeſus and the reſurrection.* Theſe ſuppoſed, that *Jeſus* was the name of ſome *new god*, and *Anaſtaſis* (*i. e.* the reſurrection) the name of ſome *new goddeſs*, in whoſe divinity, and the proper rites of their worſhip, Paul pretended to inſtruct them. Theſe men ſeized on Paul, and carried him to Areopagus, the ſupreme court of judicature in Athens; to whoſe juriſdiction all cauſes relative to religion were ſubjected. Now by the laws of Athens, to introduce new gods or religious rites, not allowed by law, was a capital crime. Paul therefore now ſtood a trial for his life before a ſupreme court of judicature; that court which had formerly tried, condemned and executed the great Socrates upon the ſame accuſation; that is, as *a ſetter forth of ſtrange gods.* Methinks one cannot properly call this *an eaſy treatment.* It is a kind of raillery too ſerious to joke with. However, the apoſtle very prudently and properly took occaſion from an inſcription *To the unknown God*, which he had obſerved on ſome old altar or altars in the city, to preach unto them the doctrine

doctrine of the ſupreme God, the creator and governor of the univerſe; and told them, that this God, hitherto unknown to them, they had worſhipped, though ignorantly; conſequently the charge, that he had ſet forth new and ſtrange gods, not allowed by the laws, was falſe and groundleſs. This plea ſeems to have been generally admitted as valid, and Paul was acquitted; but as, in the cloſe of the ſpeech, he had mentioned the reſurrection of Jeſus from the dead, this met with very different reception among his hearers. *Some*, we are told, *mocked*; *others*, perhaps ſtruck with the dignity and juſtneſs of the preceding ſentiments, promiſed, with more candor and decency, *to hear him again of this matter.*

His Lordſhip believes that " our apoſtle made leſs advantage from the eaſy treatment of his Athenian antagoniſts, than from the ſurly and curſt ſpirit of the moſt perſecuting Jewiſh cities." If he means, that he made few or no converts among them, the fact is otherwiſe. Immediately after his defence in court, and diſmiſſion from it, notwithſtanding the mockeries of ſome, we are told, that *certain men clave unto unto him and believed*; *among which was Dionyſius the Areopagite*, (one of his judges) *and a woman named Damaris*, who probably was a perſon of rank, *and others with them.* This was, I ſuppoſe, as great ſucceſs, for the time, as he generally met with among the ſurly and curſt ſpirits of the moſt perſecuting Jewiſh cities; and it does not appear, that he ſtaid in Athens after this affair, or ever returned to it.

His Lordſhip alſo ſays, that 'He, Paul, made 'leſs improvement of the candor and civility of 'his Roman judges, than of the zeal of the ſyna-'gogue, and the vehemence of his national 'prieſts.' The appeal upon which Paul was carried to Rome, was to the hearing of the emperor Nero, who was certainly, by no means diſtinguiſhed for candor and civility; and as to Paul's caſe in particular, he himſelf tells his friend Timothy,* that the emperor's well known ſternneſs and cruelty had filled all his friends with ſuch dreadful apprehenſions, that *at his firſt anſwer no man ſtood with him, but all men forſook him. Notwithſtanding*, ſays he, *the Lord ſtood with me, and ſtrengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.*

If his Lordſhip means to intimate, that Paul met with little ſucceſs in preaching the goſpel at Rome, I would obſerve, that the apoſtle's own accounts of the matter to his friends, lead us to form very different ideas; as when he thus writes to the Philippians.† *I would that ye ſhould underſtand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the goſpel. So that my bonds in Chriſt are manifeſt in all the palace, and in all other places; and many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to ſpeak the word without fear.* Such paſſages as theſe from his Lordſhip ſhew ſufficiently, that it is

* 2 Ep. iv. 16, 17. † Ch. i. 12, 13, 14.

not

not ſafe to take theſe fine and eaſy writers upon truſt, if we would not be miſled.

Let us now come down to ſucceeding times. It appears probable, that the Romans did not, for ſome time, conſider *Chriſtianity* as a diſtinct religion from *Judaiſm*, and, therefore, included its profeſſors in all the wit and ridicule they ſo liberally beſtowed upon the Jews; as all know who are acquainted with the Roman ſatiriſts. Afterwards, when the true ſtate of things became generally known, chriſtianity did by no means want antagoniſts amongſt the wits, philoſophers, and almoſt every ſpecies of writers during the firſt three hundred years, and longer, while its profeſſors were ſubjected to the moſt cruel ſufferings from the laws and magiſtrates, and the moſt virulent and univerſal odium of the ſuperſtitious and bigotted idolaters; who failed not to impute to them all the public calamities which beſet the empire in thoſe unhappy ages, as having excited the wrath of the gods by their *atheiſm* and *innovations*. During this period, the faireſt and ſureſt road ambitious writers could take to imperial favour and popular applauſe, was to pour contempt and ridicule on the chriſtians. Is it to be ſuppoſed, then, that there would be any want of candidates for ſuch tempting prizes? Dr. Lardner hath produced plentiful evidence, in his Heathen Teſtimonies, that there was not; particularly *Celſus*, the Epicurean philoſopher, in the ſecond century, attacked chriſtianity in a large work, in which, beſides the materials wherewith his own genius, reading and converſation furniſhed him, he made a plentiful uſe of all the idle

ſtories

ſtories and abſurd fictions he had ſcraped together by diligent inquiries among the Jews, in order to render Chriſt, his religion, and its profeſſors, ridiculous and contemptible.

About the ſame time, *Apuleius* and *Lucian* employed their humorous talents in the ſame ſervice. Upon a ſatirical piece, attributed to the latter, Dr. Lardner has the following ſenſible note: "We may hence perceive, that the chriſtians and their principles were, in old times, ridiculed by their ancient heathen adverſaries. It is, therefore, a miſtake of thoſe moderns, who have imagined, that the old heathens neglected this method of oppoſing chriſtianity. Nor is this the only inſtance of the kind which we have met with. Lucian's writings, before rehearſed in this chapter, are another inſtance; and unqueſtionably ſome ſuch writings have been loſt; the chriſtians of later times not thinking them fit, or worthy to be preſerved." Heathen Teſtimonies, vol. ii. p. 369.

The elaborate Porphyry took great pains in a large work, to vilify the ſcriptures, and expoſe them as full of falſehoods and inconſiſtences: Nor was he at all ſparing of his witticiſms on Chriſt and his apoſtles.

Hierocles alſo, the Præfect (not the philoſopher) while, as a magiſtrate, he harraſſed the chriſtians with all the cruelties of the Dioclefian perſecution; as a writer, he compoſed two books, "in which he endeavoured to ſhew (ſays Lactantius) that the ſacred ſcriptures overthrew themſelves, by the contradictions with which they abound, and inſiſted on ſo many texts, as inconſiſtent with each other, that one might ſuſpect,

pect, he had ſome time profeſſed the religion which he now expoſed." He ſays of Chriſt, that he was baniſhed by the Jews, and afterwards got together nine hundered men, and committed robbery. He enlarges much alſo on a compariſon of Jeſus Chriſt with the famous juggler Appollonius Tyanæus, and gives the preference greatly in favour of the latter.

Paſſing over many other oppugners of chriſtianity, in the literary way, let us come to the the emperor *Julian*, whoſe writings ſhew, that while he affected to avoid the cruelties wherewith the preceding emperors endeavoured to ſuppreſs chriſtianity, he was well diſpoſed to try every method to render it contemptible; for which worthy purpoſe he gave full employment to all his own knowledge, wit and artifice, which were by no means contemptible, and ſummoned together the whole power of the adverſaries of chriſtianity, Jews as well as heathens, encouraging them to the onſet by every mark of imperial grace and favour. Under his ſtandard many a redoubted champion for the gods ranged themſelves, armed with declamations, invectives and ſcurrilous libels againſt the *Nazarene* and his goſpel. Now while the formal writings and publications of emperors, magiſtrates, philoſophers and rhetoricians ran in this channel, is it not eaſy to judge, what tone the common diſcourſe of the people, reſpecting chriſtianity, muſt have held?

It may, perhaps, be wiſhed by ſome, that theſe things had been preſerved; and many of the moſt learned and ſincere modern defenders of chriſtianity have joined in the wiſh, that all that

was

was written of old againſt it had been preſerved to this day, as being clearly convinced, by the ſamples of thoſe writings which have come down to us, that they could not have injured the cauſe of chriſtianity with the candid and ingenuous lovers of truth and virtue, who alone can be chriſtians indeed; but they might have furniſhed us with many uſeful lights in the hiſtory of the progreſs of chriſtianity, and its ſtruggles againſt Polytheiſm and the powers of the world. But who might reaſonably be expected to preſerve them, after chriſtianity became the general profeſſion? The chriſtians were not likely to eſteem them worthy of preſervation, much leſs worth the trouble of taking, or the expence of purchaſing copies of them. Alas! we have greater reaſon to regret the loſs of much more valuable works, both of chriſtians and heathens, through neglects, accidents and the revolutions of time.

Lord Shaftſbury had a fine imagination; but, like many others, ſometimes became the dupe of it. He had a rich vein of humour and raillery; but conceived too highly of its powers. Ridicule produces a tranſient impreſſion and amuſement; but, unleſs it be founded in truth, has no laſting effect, except on the authors, and thoſe who were under like prejudices. The moment it appears falſe and impertinent, it excites only indignation or diſdain. It is not in the power of the moſt brilliant wit long to preſerve miſrepreſentations, fictions and abſurdities from contempt and oblivion. A time will come, when even the writings of a *Voltaire* muſt ſink under ſuch a load.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

NO ſtrenuous attachment, I am certain, to any particular ſyſtem of doctrines, but a deſire of ſeeing a *natural* and *unforced* interpretation of ſcripture, leads me to be very much diſſatisfied with what many of your correſpondents have offered on thoſe texts which enter into the moſt knotty points of polemical theology. *All* parties, I have lived long enough to ſee, will do any thing with ſcripture to ſerve a point. They ſacrifice perſpicuity, conſiſtency, and every juſt and *common* method for underſtanding the meaning of what an author writes, to their own peculiar opinions; to maintain which they are frequently obliged to offer force to the moſt expreſs declarations. *Some*, to ſerve a turn, they are obliged to conſider as interpolated and ſurreptitious, owing to the careleſsneſs of ſome blundering tranſcriber, or the overſtrained piety of ſome warm party zealot; and *others* they interpret away into nothing, conſidering them as allegorical alluſions to cuſtoms and rites which we know very little about. True, we muſt make great allowance for thoſe eaſtern modes of expreſſion, highly figurative, which we find ſcattered up and down in the ſcriptures, particularly the *Old Teſtament*, the ſentiments of which were wrapt up more in a myſterious and obſcure dreſs than thoſe of the *New*, which was deſigned to ſtrip religion of every diſguiſe, and

and trace *the naked nature and the living grace* of ſo divine a form. But I cannot ſee this deſign anſwered upon the modern principles of interpretation; notwithſtanding the learned patrons of it avow it as their main intention to deliver chriſtianity from every thing extraneous and myſtical. When I ſit down to read a Socinian expoſition, particularly of the epiſtolary parts of ſcripture, methinks I ſee religion as much darkened in figures, allegories, and alluſions to obſolete ordinances, cuſtoms, and rites with which we have little acquaintance, and in which no concern, by the New Teſtament as by the Old.—It is not the goſpel that brings true religion to light—it is Socinianiſm brings the religion of the goſpel to light.—The epiſtle to the Hebrews, it may be ſaid, ſeems peculiarly adapted to a Jewiſh taſte, and in condeſcenſion to that particular habit of thinking which was formed by the rituals of Moſes, the author of it makes uſe of a variety of ſacrific and figurative terms, under which are couched the principles of chriſtianity, though, properly ſpeaking, they had nothing at all to do with each other. That he ſhould ſuit his mode of expreſſion to their cuſtoms may ſeem plauſible; and as the apoſtle *became all things to all men*, it may be ſaid, he purſued this as the fitteſt method of *alluring* them to chriſtianity. When he had got them ſecurely, he might teach them better afterwards, *i. e.* make them unlearn *eſoterically* what, for prudential reaſons, he had *exoterically* preached. We will grant this—only we wiſh he had taken more care about the faith of thoſe who would come

come after him. We have not his *private* lectures.—"But we have more of his public ones "(you will ſay) addreſſed to thoſe to whom he "could open his mind more freely,—Romans, "Corinthians, Theſſalonians, and many more "of different countries, who being infected "with no Jewiſh prejudices, could be cured of "none." This doth not at all mend the matter. For upon conſulting thoſe ſeveral epiſtles, I find them, for the moſt part, written much in the ſame ſtrain. Figures, and allegorical alluſions to the conſtitution of Moſes, frequently occur. The terms *ſacrifice*, *atonement*, *propitiation*, *prieſt*, *ſin-offering*, *redemption by blood*, &c. are repeated over and over.

The notion of a *vicarious* ſacrifice is, to appearance, revealed as plain as words are capable of doing it, and in all the poſſible variety of expreſſion, ſo that any one who reads the epiſtles, as he would read any other writings, one would imagine, muſt admit the truth of *it*, if he allows of *their* authority. I find great difficulties on every ſide of theological controverſy; and ſo far from thinking the Socinians have got clear of them by their near approaches to the ſimple religion of nature or pure Theiſm, that to me, I muſt ingenuouſly confeſs, they appear to have run foul of greater difficulties than any ſect whatever, who allow of the inſpiration of ſcripture. However conſiſtent their ſcheme of principles may be with itſelf, which is a point I will not diſpute, yet I can by no means ſee it *uniformly*, nor even *generally* conſiſtent with that book which (ſtrange to think of!) they contend

tend for as the ſtandard of truth. The New Teſtament was certainly deſigned for univerſal benefit, and for inſtruction to the remoteſt periods of time; now on this *poſtulatum* I aſk, Whether it is, as to the greateſt part of it, calculated to anſwer its original deſign, if in order to underſtand it we muſt diveſt it of its literal meaning, and ſearch for its true one amidſt the refinements of criticiſm, and the cuſtoms of eaſtern nations? Will not *way-faring men and fools*, be very apt to *err therein?* Will not the *poor, to whom the goſpel* muſt be preached, and conſequently by whom it may be underſtood, be liable to make the moſt egregious blunders in their ſearches into it, and be miſled by its moſt expreſs declarations? According to Socinian expoſitions [I make uſe of the name merely for *diſtinction*] it is very evident to me, that *that* which ought to be the plaineſt and moſt intelligible book in the world, is repreſented as the moſt obſcure and uncertain, in its moſt expreſs and determinate paſſages; and what ought to be underſtood by all, as all are intereſted in the matter, cannot be underſtood, except by very few, well ſkilled in critical learning, who have ingenuity enough to draw away the veil of oriental figures, and penetration to deſcry the hidden diſtant truth.

Theſe reflections have frequently occurred to me in reading many of the papers inſerted in your Theological Repoſitory; the deſign of which, I confeſs, I greatly approve of; and ſhould be glad if ſenſible men, on every ſide of religious controverſy, would, more and more contribute to its uſefulneſs, by ſuggeſting any hints

hints that may occur to them for the illuſtration of ambiguous points, and the promotion of ſacred literature. I would have every thing tried. Truth is never aſhamed of the light nor afraid of it. I ſhould miſtruſt whatever lurks behind the ſcenes. Shew it openly; if it is not counterfeit, it will bear the narroweſt and moſt critical inſpection. If I ſee perſons embrace ſentiments which they are backward to examine to the bottom, ſentiments which lie in their minds like an old, muſty, heavy folio upon a ſhelf unopened, untouched from year to year, I always ſuſpect they are worth little or nothing. One would think that ſuch had ſome ſecret conſciouſneſs of their falſity and baſeneſs, or at leaſt, a ſuſpicion of it. An honeſt and unprejudiced mind, which bows not ſervilely to uſurped authority, and prefers good ſenſe to uncertain ſyſtem, would inquire, with critical accuracy, into the grounds of ſuch ſuſpicions; but a ſlave to education would ſtifle them by ſaying, "They are the riſings of corruption, and the "doubts of carnal reaſoning." Hereby the ſpirit of inquiry is weakened and depreſſed, and intellectual bondage, of neceſſity, takes place.

I agree extremely well with your ingenious correſpondent PATROBAS, in the introduction to his "Remarks on the Two Creations," (page 90, vol. ii.) when he ſpeaks of the ill influence that early prejudices, lazineſs, cowardly and ſuperſtitious fear, &c. have on the mind in forming its creed. But the reflections I have juſt now haſtily committed to paper on the *perſpicuity of ſcripture*, or, at leaſt, the *neceſſity of it*, came very

naturally into my mind, as I entered farther into that Gentleman's Remarks. "How our fore-"fathers (thought I) have been, for ages, grop-"ing in the dark! and how natural it was for "them to do ſo! for the candle was hid under "a buſhel; till, luckily, a century or ſo back, "two or three Italians, chanced to ſtumble "upon it, and kicked it away, and continuing "my ſoliloquy) having to their comfort and the "world's aſtoniſhment, perceived the candle "which had, through many, many dark ages, "burned like a ſepulchral lamp unnoticed, they "thought it neceſſary to put it into a candle-"ſtick, that it might give light to all who were "willing to ſee."

Who could have conceived that "In the "beginning was the word, the word without "which was not any thing made that was "made."—Who could have divined that theſe words mean "that eternal word (λογος) rea-"ſon, wiſdom, and power of God, which is "God himſelf, (*i. e.* an attribute of God *is* "God!) by which the world had been made, "by which he dwelled among the Jews in the "tabernacle and the temple, dwelled and re-"ſided in Jeſus in the fulleſt manner?" And who could have thought that any one, capable of reading plain Greek or plain Engliſh, could be ſo extravagantly fond of ſuch an interpretation, as to think that a contrary one "will *now* hardly "ever meet (p. 93.) with any more patrons?" Let us paraphraſe the words honeſtly, according to the above given ſenſe of them. "In the "beginning (there is no particular meaning

"fixed

" fixed to that; I ſuppoſe it muſt be under-
" ſtood in the beginning of the chriſtian diſ-
" penſation) was the reaſon of God, and the
" reaſon of God was with God, and the reaſon of
" God was God, the ſame was in the beginning
" with God." &c. In the fourteenth verſe, this reaſon of God is carnalized or modified into fleſh; " it was made fleſh, and dwelt amongſt us." Alas! it ſoon made its exit, for after it " was " preached unto the Gentiles, it was received " up into glory!" To refer to a ſimilar text in 1 Tim. iii. 16. Samuel Crellius (if Artemonius be he) ſaw that his ſcheme was ſo embarraſſed by the introduction to St. John's goſpel, that, to get clear of the difficulty, he ſaw it neceſſary to get rid of it. He ſaw his ſcheme of doctrine could not ſtand if that ſtood, and to make ſhort work of it, he choſe to eraſe it as an interpolation.

I think PATROBAS is no leſs unfortunate in his obſervations on the firſt chapter of the epiſtle to the Hebrews. According to his notions of things, creation, when applied to Chriſt, was, only a *new modelling* or reforming the moral ſtate of affairs. Then the reformation of depraved mankind *only* was the object of his attention and care. How, upon this ſuppoſition, can we interpret the ſecond verſe, *By whom alſo he made the* worlds? What worlds beſides ours did he new create or reform? I ſhall ſay ſomething more on this head, when I expreſs how greatly I am diſſatisfied with what he notes on the tenth verſe. *And thou, Lord, in the beginning, &c.* The apoſtle quotes a variety of texts from the Old Teſtament, to evince the ſuperiority of

Chriſt to the angels. Amongſt many quotations he hath the following remarkable one, which he applies to the ſon, *Thy throne, O God, &c.* or, "God is thy throne;" if it muſt be ſo tranſlated, though the other is certainly the moſt obvious and natural both in the Hebrew and the Greek. *A ſceptre of righteouſneſs is a ſceptre of thy kingdom. Thou haſt loved righteouſneſs* (who? the ſon, certainly) *and hated iniquity, &c.* And, juſt as the apoſtle had introduced ſeveral other texts before as applicable to Chriſt. *And thou, Lord, in the beginning, &c.* According to PATROBAS, here is an immediate tranſition (but I am certain it is a moſt unnatural one, then) to the Father, merely to ſupport what was ſaid two verſes before.

The prior quotations were directly applicable to Chriſt and the angels, the characters of which are contraſted; but here is a quotation of three verſes, which bear no reference at all to Chriſt, according to PATROBAS, nor can I ſee, upon his expoſition, that it anſwers any end. What he ſuggeſts about the power of God, as the ſtability of his ſon's kingdom, appears to me quite unnatural and foreign to the purpoſe. The interpretation which PATROBAS offers of Col. i. 16. is very far from being ſatisfactory. It is ſo exceſſively laboured and refined, as to give me a ſuſpicion that it is not conſonant with the ſimplicity of the word of God. *For by him all things were created that are in heaven and that are in earth, viſible and inviſible, &c.* The former queſtion from Heb. i. 2. recurs, with greater weight, here. How did Chriſt, by his miniſtrations on earth, renovate

all

all things in heaven? Was the moral ſtate of affairs, the inviſible world, ſuch as needed an *amendment*, and did the influence of Chriſt's example and preaching extend beyond this earth? What PATROBAS ſuggeſts (though timorouſly and at a diſtance; ſince it will not bear to read too near the text) of the angels being marſhalled under Chriſt for the regulation of matters in his church below, to me, no way anſwers to what Paul aſſerts of their being univerſally *created by him*; and to maintain the point and enforce it, he repeats, *All things were created by him and for him.* PATROBAS does not ſo much as attempt to throw the leaſt gleam of light (that I can perceive) on the ſingular phraſe *for him.* How were all things created *for* Chriſt? or, if he chuſes, *renovated for him.* If a change was made in the univerſal ſtate of things, *for whom* was it made? Was it not for his glory, *by whom, and to whom, and through whom are all things?* Then how could it be ſaid, that this *moral* renovation was effected not only by Chriſt, but *for him!* (εις αυτον.) I ſhould be glad if any of your learned correſpondents would offer ſomething clear and natural (if poſſible) upon this text; for the interpretation PATROBAS hath offered, hath more obſcured it than it was before. I can ſee it no way conſiſtent with the Socinian ſcheme; it contradicts it as plainly and expreſsly as words can. I ſhould think any perſon truly diſintereſted muſt ſee it. I ſhall conclude theſe ſpontaneous remarks by obſerving, that if Socinianiſm is nothing but ſimple and rational chriſtianity reſtored, an infidel would

naturally ſay, " What a fine guide this New Teſ-
" tament is! Let it be no longer called a *revela-*
" *tion.* The original intent of it hath been miſ-
" taken, from the very firſt ages, by all the
" fathers, martyrs and confeſſors of the church.
" They talked *univerſally* of the atonement and
" pre-exiſtence of Chriſt, and thought they had
" ſufficient grounds to believe it from the moſt
" expreſs, poſitive, and repeated declarations.
" Alas! they all miſtook the matter. There
" was no ſuch thing as an atonement, Chriſt
" did not create the world, he never exiſted before
" he was born of the Virgin Mary. Strange!
" that this plain and ſure word of teſtimony
" ſhould not have made better proviſion againſt
" ſuch idle and ſuperſtitious errors, which de-
" ſcended from generation to generation, and
" were not detected till a few obſcure men, in the
" ſixteenth century, hit upon the true meaning
" of ſcripture paradoxes. They did it for our
" ſakes, to conform more to our ſceptical taſte.
" We thank them for their obliging condeſcen-
" ſion; but we had rather adhere to plain reaſon
" than to ambiguous tradition. It is the *ſame*
" thing, we are informed; and whilſt we may,
" without pains, have the kernel, we do not
" care to break our teeth in cracking the ſhell."

If any of your correſpondents will take no-
tice of, and obviate theſe remarks, they will
highly oblige, Gentlemen,

Your humble ſervant,

BARUMENSIS.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

If the following thoughts upon a ſubject of importance, ſuggeſted in a letter from a worthy friend, come within your plan, and you think they merit a place in your Repoſitory, *you are welcome to them. If any thing hurtful, or dangerous to the cauſe of true religion and undefiled, ſhould be found in them, ſome other correſpondent will have an opportunity to refute them, and adminiſter a proper antidote.*

Rara temporum fælicitas, quibus ſentire quæ velis, et loqui quæ ſentias, liceat! TACIT.

IT is, I think, a point admitted by the beſt writers in defence of chriſtianity, that the great progreſs of infidelity in the preſent age, has not been owing ſo much to the want of ſufficient evidence to convince every candid mind of its divine authority, as to many doctrines of men of later invention, which have been grafted upon, and, as it were, incorporated with it. Chriſtianity has been dreſſed up in various forms, with ſo many human inventions and additions, matters of nice and curious ſpeculation, that it is no wonder unprejudiced and thinking men have been led, ſome to deny, others to doubt, whether ſuch a religion could come from God. In Popiſh countries, where men have no

other notion or idea of chriſtianity but what is there received, and eſtabliſhed as ſuch, it is well known that ſcepticiſm and infidelity prevail among the learned to a great degree. In proteſtant countries, who have thrown off this grievous and intolerable yoke, yet where religion is eſtabliſhed by law, there is ſtill ſo much left of the rubbiſh of popery, and ſcholaſtic divinity, ſuch a mixture of things, foreign and adventitious to it, that thoſe who pretend to freedom of thought, but will not be at the pains to examine, and diſtinguiſh, and take the eſtabliſhed ſyſtems of theology for genuine chriſtianity, are eaſily perverted, and tempted to indulge a ſceptical humour, which by infection is ſoon communicated, eſpecially in a free country, and ſo the contagion ſpreads, eſpecially among the gay and licentious, the young and unguarded.

It muſt be of the utmoſt importance, therefore, to purge religion from all theſe foreign mixtures, which weak or artful men, in ſeveral ages, have introduced, to bring it back, as it were, to its firſt principles, reduce it pure and unadulterated to its original and genuine ſimplicity, and to make nothing an eſſential part of it, which is not made ſo in thoſe ſacred and original records, where, and where only it is to be found.

There is no queſtion to be made but thoſe adventitious doctrines, forged in the dark ages of ſcholaſtic, and metaphyſical jargon,* are the great

* May we not rank among theſe, "a Trinity in unity, "and the imputation of Adam's ſin to all his poſterity; the "original

great ſtumbling block, and cauſe of offence, from which infidelity draws its principal ſtrength and ſupport. They hang as a dead weight upon revelation, which we can never hope to defend to advantage, till this rubbiſh, this *wood*, *hay*, and *ſtubble*, is removed and cleared away. Then will chriſtianity ſtand on its own bottom, ſupported on the firm baſis of its own native truth and excellence. Then will it appear to all unprejudiced minds, to be what it really is, a religion worthy of God, perfective of human nature, and one of the beſt gifts of the great Father of lights and of mercies to the human race. Then will the great bar and obſtruction to its progreſs, and propagation through the infidel and pagan world be removed, and a door opened for the converſion of Jews and Gentiles.

But here a queſtion naturally occurs, "how "comes it to paſs that theſe adventitious doc- "trines ſtill keep their ground, eſpecially in "proteſtant countries, where, ſince the reform- "ation from popery, the light of reaſon and "truth hath not only dawned, but ſhone upon "many of them in its full luſtre; the fountains of "knowledge have been opened to all, and a free

"original inherent corruption of human nature, perpetu- "ally inclining it to all evil, and diſabling it from all "good; abſolute election and reprobation; the abſolute "neceſſity of vicarious puniſhment, or a ſtrict and proper "ſatisfaction to divine juſtice, otherwiſe vindictive and im- "placable; the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to "believers, who are not to look upon good works as any "term or condition of juſtification or ſalvation," &c. &c.

"acceſs

" acceſs allowed to the ſcriptures." How comes it to paſs that " for near three centuries, ſince " that happy event took place, ſuch doctrines are " ſtill held ſacred and venerable, regarded with " a ſuperſtitious awe, and men of parts and ge- " nius employ all their wit, learning and abilities " to defend and ſupport them, and often with " ſo much zeal and warmth as if all was at ſtake, " and the very foundations of chriſtianity itſelf " were ſhaken."

The obvious and plain anſwer to this queſtion is, that where ſyſtems of religion, framed and compoſed by fallible men, where creeds and confeſſions of faith, deſcending to many particulars, and controverted points, not clearly revealed in ſcripture, are eſtabliſhed by human authority, and made the neceſſary terms of admiſſion to the church, and to the dignities and emoluments of it; when and whereſoever this is the caſe, a ſtrong bias is put upon men's minds, the underſtanding is fettered, all free and impartial inquiry is diſcouraged; theſe doctrines, however abſurd and unintelligible, how contradictory ſoever, not only to ſcripture but to reaſon and common ſenſe, by long cuſtom and tradition, become ſacred, and are handed down from one age to another, dignified with the venerable title of *ſound* and *orthodox*, and the contrary is branded with the name of *dangerous*, *unſound*, *heretical*, &c.

Thus every church, *Popiſh*, or *Proteſtant*, *Epiſcopalian* or *Preſbyterian*, *Lutheran* or *Calviniſt*, which owes its eſtabliſhment and ſupport to human authority, becomes in reality, and to all intents

tents and purpoſes, a kingdom of this world, founded in, and deriving, not only its ſtrength and dignity, but its very exiſtence from human laws and ſanctions. It becomes a part of the civil polity and conſtitution of the country, and as a celebrated, Divine* ſaid of chriſtianity, is ſo incorporated, as to ſtand or fall with it. This may be affirmed of all national churches; but the chriſtian church was inſtituted on ſo large and liberal a foundation by its author and founder, that it was to extend over all the world, to every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation under heaven, and to laſt to the end of it. It is indeed ſo unconnected with, and independent of all human authority, of all countenance and ſupport of the civil magiſtrate of any country, that it may continue unhurt, nay flouriſh and proſper, amidſt the various changes, ſhocks and revolutions of kingdoms and empires.

I have long conſidered this as an argument, which appears to me unanſwerable, againſt all eſtabliſhments of religion. The chriſtian religion was plainly deſigned by its author, to be not a particular, but an univerſal religion, not a temporary inſtitution, but perpetual. When the Gentiles were called into the chriſtian church, and admitted to partake of its privileges, the ceremonial law of commandments and ordinances, which ſeparated the Jews from other nations, was aboliſhed, and the middle wall of partition thrown down, and all true believers, whereſoever ſcattered abroad through the world,

* Dr. Rogers's Preface to his Sermons.

were

were to form one church, one great fold under the peculiar care and protection of the great ſhepherd, and to have fellowſhip and communion with each other, and with him, their only head, king, and law-giver.

But what are theſe, commonly called national churches or human eſtabliſhments of chriſtianity, fenced in with creeds and confeſſions, incloſed with canons and conſtitutions of various kinds, authoritatively enjoined to be ſubſcribed and obſerved, and fortified with the powers and ſanctions of this world; what, I ſay, are theſe ſtrong holds and fortreſſes, raiſed and ſupported by human authority, but ſo many arbitrary incloſures in the church of Chriſt, as it were, ſo many monopolies of the chriſtian religion, confining the privileges of chriſtians, which equally belong to *all*, to one nation or country, and excluding all others; what are they, even the beſt of them, but temporary inſtitutions of human policy, as variable as the civil government of each country where they are? When the former wall of partition, created for a time, for wiſe ends, by God himſelf, was, by his expreſs order and appointment taken down, ſhall men preſume to erect new partition walls of their own in the church of Chriſt, which can have no other tendency but to ſeparate, divide, and alienate chriſtians from each other, who ought to be *all one*, not many, but *one fold under one ſhepherd*.

Beſides, as theſe eſtabliſhments are utterly repugnant to the nature and extent of Chriſt's kingdom, we may venture to affirm, that they are, and ever have been, the greateſt bar and hindrance

hindrance to its progreſs and propagation in the world; nor can chriſtianity ever prevail or become the religion of all the world, as we have the ſtrongeſt reaſon to believe it one day will, till theſe eſtabliſhments are aboliſhed, and all human authority, in matters of religion, is univerſally diſclaimed and rejected, and every man left to the free and full uſe of his own reaſon and private judgment, to purſue the dictates of his conſcience, and to make the beſt of his bible.

If there be any truth or ſolidity in theſe remarks, what muſt one think of thoſe Proteſtant Diſſenters, who, though deſtitute of all civil authority, and who only ſubſiſt by a toleration themſelves, yet, following the example of thoſe eſtabliſhed churches, from which they pretend to diſſent and ſeparate on this very account, have created arbitrary incloſures of their own, made new terms of chriſtian and miniſterial communion, and continue to enforce theſe unrighteous impoſitions upon candidates for the miniſtry, as terms of admiſſion to their ſeveral churches? What, I ſay, can we think of ſuch Diſſenters, but that they neither underſtand the true principles of religious liberty, of the reformation from Popery, nor of their own diſſent; thoſe principles without which chriſtianity itſelf could never have taken place, nor triumphed over all the eſtabliſhments then in being, and without which there would not have been a chriſtian or Proteſtant in the world. I am, Gentlemen, your's, &c.

SINCERUS.

A LET-

A LETTER TO EUSEBIUS.

SIR,

YOU are pleaſed to recommend to my conſideration, ſome doubts of Paulinus, about our Saviour's anſwer to the Sadducees, on the ſubject of the reſurrection, No. IV. Vol. 1. and on St. Paul's deductions from the ſtory of Melchizedec, in the laſt number of the Repoſitory.

I think, with Paulinus, that our Saviour's argument was *argumentum ad hominem*, but never the worſe argument for that, if the Jews' notion he went upon was juſt. The very ſtrong expreſſions, *I am that I am*; the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob. This is my name *for ever*, and this is my memorial, *unto all generations*, ſeem to me to imply, not only, *I am he who was their God*, but alſo, *I am ſtill the ſame*, and ſtand in the ſame relation to them, throughout all generations; and the Jews could ſcarcely underſtand them otherwiſe, ſince it was undoubtedly their *ancient* opinion, that at death, the duſt returned to the earth as it was, but *the ſpirit returned to God who gave it*. Eccl. xii. 7. According to this notion, our Saviour, when giving up the ghoſt, ſaid, *Father, into thy hands I commend my ſpirit*; and our Saviour's expreſſion, in this very argument, Luke xx. 38. Παντες γαρ αυτω ζωσιν, may perhaps be explained by St Paul's, Col. iii. 3. η ζωη υμων κεκρυπται συν τω χριστω εν τω Θεω, and that apoſtle, ſpeaking of Chriſt's having aboliſhed

liſhed death, and brought life and immortality to light by the goſpel, 2 Tim. i. 12. ſays, *I know whom I have believed, and am perſuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, againſt that day.* The doctrine of an intermediate ſtate (of which we know nothing) has, I apprehend, nothing to do with this argument. Their life is as ſure by the power and purpoſe of God, as if it was never interrupted, or ſeemingly interrupted by their death; for ſuppoſing there be no intermediate active or conſcious ſtate, the connection betwixt their former and future life, will be to them as inſtantaneous and immediate, as if they lived all the while, though ten thouſand years of common time intervened. They who are ſure to live again, may fairly enough be conſidered as ſtill living, and their relation to, and connection with the Father and preſerver of their ſpirits, ſtill the ſame, though other temporary human relations and connections ceaſe.

As to Melchizedec, it is true we know nothing more of him but what is ſaid of him in Geneſis and the Pſalms; what more the Jews at that time, or the writer to the Hebrews, might know of him, is quite uncertain: but from what is there written of him, may be fairly inferred, every thing this ſacred writer ſeems to me to have ſuggeſted, viz. his ſuperiority in ſome reſpects to Abraham, and to the Levitical prieſtood, and the Levitical prieſthood's being only an occaſional temporary inſtitution, the other, that of Jeſus Chriſt, a permanent one. Abraham, like other pious maſters of families was, in a ſenſe, prophet, prieſt, and king, over his

his own houſe; but this venerable perſon might be king and prieſt too, over Abraham, and all who at that time believed the promiſes of God, and that by extraordinary divine appointment; yea, even as the type or repreſentative of the promiſed Meſſiah; for he is expreſsly called *the prieſt of the moſt high God*, and I think the Pſalmiſt's words imply ſome ſuch divine inſtitution, [after the *order* of Melchizedec.] The two epithets beſtowed upon him, *king of righteouſneſs*, and *king of peace*, beſpeak him to be a very good as well as a very great perſonage; and it is not improbable but his great age might add ſome venerableneſs to his character, though we ſhould not ſuppoſe him, as ſome have done, to be *Shem*, born before the deluge, and ſtill living at that time.

His being without father, without mother, without deſcent; having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, muſt, I think, refer entirely to his prieſtly office, upon which the argument turns, which neither deſcended from others to him, nor to a ſucceſſion of others from him, nor ceaſed at any particular period of his life, differing in all theſe reſpects from that of the prieſts under the law.

Abraham, in paying him this homage, might know him to be, and conſider him as a divinely ordained type of the great mediator, who had been ſo ſolemnly foretold to ſpring out of his loins, and though he was to be his ſon, yet reſpect him as his Lord, like David; and of *him* it is now witneſſed, that *he* ever liveth to make interceſſion for us. Heb. vii. 25. and even Levi,

who

who (for a time) received tythes of his brethren, might be ſaid to pay tythes to this high prieſt, in that his father Abraham paid them. Can it once be thought that this writer (eſpecially if St. Paul) ever imagined the Melchizedec of Abraham's time was ſtill living, or that the Hebrews to whom he wrote, would ſo underſtand him, or that they did ſo underſtand him? I can as ſoon believe that our Saviour's diſciples underſtood his words [*this is my body*] in the abſurd Popiſh ſenſe of tranſubſtantiation. We modern critics, are too ready to take a fancied advantage againſt the ancients, from their bolder way of expreſſing things.

If the 110th Pſalm was really a prophecy of Chriſt (and the Jews themſelves deemed it ſo) this argument is juſt and beautiful. This firſt order of prieſthood, was not ſet aſide by the occaſional inſtitution of the Levitical prieſthood afterwards, any more than by ſeeming to lie dormant for ſome ages before *that*; but actually ſet *that* and every other *hierarchy* aſide, when our Saviour, the ſubſtance of theſe ſhadows, entered upon that high and unchangeable office.

Such are my thoughts on theſe ſubjects, which I freely ſubmit to your correction or improvement, and am, Sir,

Your moſt obedient ſervant, &c.

W. W.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

I Agree with CORNELIUS, that revelation lies level to the meaneſt capacity, in things eſſential to ſalvation, that in this revelation *are ſome things hard to be underſtood*, and that it requires genius, learning, and a conſiderable acquaintance with oriental hiſtory and manners to develope ſome parts of a book ſo ancient as the bible is; but as the object of *Peter's* δυσνοητα, particularly referred to, is confined to Paul's writings, I ſhould have been much pleaſed, and poſſibly no leſs edified, had he favoured the public with his ſentiments on that paſſage. Without pretending to ſupply that defect, or anticipate any thing he may hereafter offer, I ſhall juſt give the double conſtruction which the words admit of, and propoſe a few *queries* ariſing out of them, to the conſideration of your correſpondents.

1ſt, If the preſent reading εν οις εστι δυσνοητα τινα is retained, Paul's writings, in general, are by no means taxed with obſcurity. By conſtruing the words εν οις, with the nearer antecedent τεσων, as they muſt be, Peter alludes only to the particular ſubject he is there ſpeaking of, and which, he ſays, his brother Paul alſo had handled. The ſubject is *the coming of Chriſt to judgment, with the conflagration of the world, and the new heavens and earth to ſucceed.* Now whether St. Paul has ſaid any thing on that ſubject obſcure, and

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tending to miſlead chriſtians, that Peter himſelf is not equally or more chargeable with ſaying, is a point, concerning which, I ſhall not affirm any thing; thoſe that would be ſatisfied muſt read both carefully. If the words εν οις, are to be conſtrued with the remoter antecedent επιστολαις, the apoſtle is guilty of a manifeſt violation of the rules of grammar.

But, 2dly, Should we reject the preſent reading, and ſubſtitute αις for οις, as ſome MSS. have it, and as *Beza* contends is the *true* reading; the charge of obſcurity, in that caſe, becomes general, and the apoſtle affirms that in *all* the epiſtles of Paul then extant, there were *ſome things hard to be underſtood*, and very liable to cavil and miſrepreſentation; and ſure no one will ſay they are of leſs difficult interpretation *now*. At that time many Jewiſh converts ſtrenuouſly inſiſted upon incorporating the modes of their national faith with a religion calculated for the univerſe in general; this was a wild ſcheme, and as ſuch the apoſtle oppoſed it with all his might; and this, I ſuppoſe, it was that gave riſe to his controverſial divinity. Upon this ſecond conſtruction of the words, I would ground the following *queries:*

1. Might not the ſingle circumſtance of *a local faith*, as that of the Jews certainly was, have ſuggeſted to Paul a better defence of chriſtianity than any he has made?

2. In oppoſing the Jewiſh ſpirit and claims, has not our apoſtle advanced ſome unguarded poſitions?

3. Are writings ſo obſure and of ſuch difficult interpretation (as ſome of his epiſtles confeſſedly are) calculated for the edification of chriſtians in general?

4. Had they a peculiar force and propriety in them to convert the Jews, and have they not converted many profeſſed chriſtians of modern times to *myſticiſm* and *licentiouſneſs?*

5. Was not this the deſtructive concluſion which *St. Peter* was apprehenſive might be drawn from them, and which, in fact, was drawn from them in his time?

6. Are they to be regarded, therefore, in all points as a rule of faith to us?

And laſtly, May not one take the liberty of appealing from the deciſions of *Paul*, to the authority of *Chriſt*, as the *dernier reſort*, eſpecially as he does for himſelf, and alſo in the name of his apoſtolic brethren, diſclaim all *dominion over the faith of chriſtians?*

Theſe queries are ſubmitted, by

PYRRHO.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

2 Corinthians, xi. 32.

In Damaſcus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damaſcenes with a garriſon, &c.

GENTLEMEN,

THeſe words ſeem to be attended with a difficulty, which no commentator I have yet ſeen has adverted to; and being a difficulty of the

the hiſtorical kind, I was a good deal ſurprized to find it overlooked both by Dr. *Lardner* and Mr. *Biſcoe* in his *Boylean Lectures*, eſpecially as the profeſſed deſign of thoſe writers is to aſcertain the facts mentioned in the New Teſtament by the concurring teſtimonies of Jewiſh, Greek, and Roman hiſtorians. The *latter* has taken a great deal of pains to ſhew, that Luke is an exact writer, both as to the places he deſcribes, and the facts he relates, with their various circumſtances; and both theſe reſpectable writers will ever be remembered with gratitude by the friends of truth and chriſtianity for what they have done.

Luke, when he comes to this part of St. Paul's hiſtory, only mentions a conſpiracy of the Jews againſt him at *Damaſcus*, which he eſcaped by the vigilance of his fellow diſciples in that city, but takes no notice of any thing farther; whereas Paul expreſsly aſſerts, in the words above quoted, that Damaſcus was at that time under the dominion of *Aretas* the king. Now the difficulty is, to reconcile this particular fact with the truth of hiſtory, and the profound ſilence of *Joſephus* and the *Roman hiſtorians*. *Petræa*, where Aretas reigned, was, at the time of Paul's converſion, and indeed had been long before, a dependent kingdom, and the Damaſcene territory part of the Roman province of Syria. It is no where ſaid, that either *Auguſtus* or *Tiberius* made Aretas a grant of *Damaſcus*, or annexed it to his *Petrean* dominions. How then came he to poſſeſs himſelf of it? If the Romans reſented his overthrow of Herod's army, ſo far as

as to order the preſident *Vitellius* to attack him, and ſend his head to Rome, much more would they have reſented his invading a province immediately under their own dominion; nor is it probable, that *Aretas* would have taken a ſtep of that kind, that muſt, in all likelihood, have been attended with the loſs of his life and kingdom. I ſhould be glad to be favoured with a ſolution, and am, Your's,

PYRRHO.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

WHAT has already appeared in your *Repoſitory*, with the ſame ſigniture as the preſent, will be ſufficient to ſatisfy every candid reader, that I have no intention to do any prejudice to the cauſe of chriſtianity by the following queries, addreſſed to the *friends of our holy religion:*

1. Does not Chriſt, in the prayer which he offers to his Father juſt before he was betrayed, expreſsly except ſome amongſt mankind from his benevolent wiſhes? See John xvii. 9. *I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou haſt given me, &c.*

2. How is this exception reconcileable with true univerſal benevolence; of which our Lord is ſuppoſed to have been a perfect example?

3. Would it not have been more agreeable to our Saviour's general character and conduct, and the benevolence which he himſelf inculcates,

to

to have expreſſed himſelf rather after this manner? "I pray for them which thou haſt given "me; and not only for them, but for the "whole world; that all men may embrace my "goſpel, and be preſerved from falling after-"wards into ſin, that they may eſcape ever-"laſting perdition."

I ſhall eſteem it a very great favour, if any of your correſpondents, thinking me wrong, either in the ſenſe in which I underſtand the above words, or the objection I make to them, ſuppoſing my conſtruction of them to be right, would kindly rectify my miſtake. I aſſure *you* and *them*, that it is a deſire of information, and by no means of cavilling at, or cenſuring any part of Chriſt's character or conduct, that gives you the trouble of the above queries.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your humble ſervant,

G. H.

To the Editors of the Theological Repoſitory.

GENTLEMEN,

If any of your correſpondents will pleaſe to favour the public with their thoughts upon the ſubjects of the following queries, they will very much oblige ſeveral of your readers, but eſpecially,

Your humble ſervant,

N. F.

I Should be glad to know whether there can be any reaſon given why Chriſt is emphatically

cally called *the ſon of man* in all the four evangeliſts, whereas, if our creed be true, that he was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghoſt, without the aſſiſtance of man, then he could not any way properly be called the ſon of man.

Farther; There have many aweful diſcourſes been thundered out of the pulpit, concerning the judgment-day at the end of the world; in which they have boldly declared, that all men and women muſt, that day, give account of all their thoughts, words and actions before their judge and the whole world. Now, I deſire to know if ſuch accounts be given up in a progreſſive way, as we finite mortals uſe to do, or not. If thoſe accounts be given up in that ſlow progreſſive way, that day of judgment muſt be longer than the duration of the whole world. I think it appears more probable that there is a particular judgment, and perſons' fate is determined when they go out of this world by God and their own conſcience, and they are put into ſuch a place and condition as they are fit for. Otherwiſe the wicked, that died in the early ages of the world, muſt be puniſhed ſome thouſands of years before they are judicially condemned, and the righteous be reaping the rewards of their labours before they are, in a judicial way, diſcharged from their guilt, and entitled to happineſs, which is contrary to our way of proceeding in courts of judicature.

Laſtly, I find Matthew ſaith, that Jacob begat Joſeph, and Luke ſaith he was the ſon of Heli. How muſt theſe be underſtood?

END OF VOLUME THE SECOND.